

FUGITIVE FABLES.

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7. FUGITIVE TABLES.



PRICE 30 IN BOARD.

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EIGHTY-NINE
FUGITIVE FABLES,
IN VERSE;
MORAL, PRUDENTIAL, AND
ALLEGORICAL.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

MEN SHOULD BE TAUGHT, AS IF WE TAUGHT THEM NOT.

POPE.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. MURRAY, N^o 32, FLEET-STREET.
M.DCC.XCII.

EIGHTY-NINE

FUGITIVE FABLES

IN VERS

MORAL, PRUDENTIAL AND
ALLEGORICAL



NEW BRITISH MUSEUM, 100, NEWINGTON ROAD, LONDON, E. 8.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. MURRAY, 20, FLEET STREET.

M.DCC.XCII.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

FABLES, in all ages, and in all countries, have been deemed a species of composition, which eminently unites the agreeable and the useful. On what is so generally acknowledged, a studied panegyric becomes superfluous. It will be sufficient to observe, that a well-constructed Fable is a little narrative, which, while it fascinates the imagination by pleasing images, by lively description, and by the vivacity of a quick dialogue, illustrates the most important instructions of morality, and the most wise maxims of human prudence.

Of Fables collected in the English language, there are none which have been found capable of long fixing the attention of the public, if we except those of GAY and MOORE. Inferior writers have had some success, but they have not always attended to the nature of FABLE; which does not so much require the ambitious ornaments of poetry, as simplicity of diction, and conciseness of narration.

It is thought that a selection of Miscellaneous Fables, which might attract the regard of Readers by the variety of their subjects, as well as by their intrinsic merit, would form a very desirable volume. We have been favoured in this collection by a literary friend;
and

and in the elder Magazines we found scattered a number of these little pieces of poetry, which appeared to be well adapted for our purpose. Our materials were indeed abundant, but our rejections were copious; what our volume has lost in bulk, it has, we hope, acquired in value.

We have classed our FABLES into three orders: The first are MORAL, which inculcate the practice of some virtue; the second are PRUDENTIAL, which display maxims of practical wisdom to direct us in the pursuits of life; and the third are ALLEGORICAL, which, with the utility of sentiment, combine the elegancies of the higher poetry.

THE EDITOR.

C O N-

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FUGITIVE FABLES.



PART I.

MORAL FABLES.

FABLE I.

The CAT, the MONKEY, and the CHESNUTS.

WHEN father Esop liv'd, each creature,
Nay, even vegetable nature
At human kind could have its fling,
And arm reproof with keenest sting;
By mimic actions could betray
Each lurking hypocrite to day,
Could foster humble Virtue's cause,
And gain her bashful friends, applause,
The race of Man, with all their pride,
Could not the probing search abide;
Beasts, Birds, and Fishes, Reptiles too,
Some faithful striking image drew,
And ev'ry Knave, and ev'ry Fool,
Might read himself in Esop's school.
Both far and wide the lesson spread,
And Vice in corners hung her head.

B

Ah!

Ah! could we now persuade the Plain,
To wield her wholesome scourge again,
Would she but hold her moral glass
For men to look in as they pass,
Again we might have hope to see
The reign of good Simplicity;
Diffident Virtue in her sphere,
Acting without restraint, or fear;
And Worth no longer doom'd to struggle
With Artifice, Chicane, and Juggle;
But—of example lest we fail,
ESOP shall furnish us a tale:

Once on a time, in coldest weather,
A MONKEY and a CAT together
Were sitting by the fire, in chat
Of various sort, both this and that,
Each reigning topic of the time,
Which can't be crowded here in rhyme;
Both so polite, and both so civil,
(For PUG would have deceiv'd the Devil)
So full of vows and protestations,
So full of mutual obligations,
Friendships reciprocal they swore,
From this time forth, for evermore.

By chance it happen'd that the Maid
Some CHESNUTS down to roast had laid,

Not

Not unobserv'd; with eager eyes
 PUG view'd askance the fav'ry prize,
 Watching the moment nicely well,
 When, parch'd with heat, the rindy shell
 Burst out, poor PUSS's paw he seiz'd,
 And 'twixt the glowing embers squeez'd,
 Till every CHESNUT he had got,
 One after t'other, piping hot;
 Nor made the compliment of one
 To PUSS for what she had undergone;
 But, sweeping all for dearest self,
 He skipp'd aloft upon a shelf,
 Grinning at easy PUSS the while,
 The dupe of his insidious guile,
 Whilst she, poor thing! was left to purr,
 And lick alone her damag'd fur.

FABLE II.

The KITE and NIGHTINGALE.

A Starving KITE, upon a bar,
 (Worn out with long fatigues of war)
 Whose pointed claws, and hooked bill,
 Shew'd his profession was to kill,

B 2

Thus

Thus grieving spoke, in doleful strain—
(Your heart will pity, and disdain.)

‘ How blind is every thing on earth !

‘ And how injurious to my worth !

‘ Tho’ all the Cote my sorrow see,

‘ No Dove will help me with a pea :

‘ Hob’s field they robb’d a month together,

‘ I never hurt a single feather :

‘ The Lark whom I secure to rest,

‘ (I slew the Snake that robb’d her nest)

‘ Will not a little worm supply ;

‘ But would rejoice to see me die :

‘ No Crow invites me to a treat,

‘ Tho’ what I kill’d he often eat :

‘ Man, were he grateful, would determine

‘ My merit in destroying vermin,

‘ And make me happy to the last,

‘ In justice to my service past ;

‘ But Man, that thankless wretch is he,

‘ Prefers yon NIGHTINGALE to me.’

‘ Alas ! (the NIGHTINGALE replies)

‘ I own, my little merit lies

‘ In innocence, and tender cares

‘ About my family affairs ;

‘ Or chaunting soft a pretty tale,

‘ To please my neighbours of the vale.

‘ Perhaps

‘ Perhaps we gratitude may want,
‘ Because you are too arrogant :
‘ Your worth, display’d with all your skill,
‘ Lies chiefly in omitting ill ;
‘ And only then for want of pow’r
‘ To seize the Dove you would devour,
‘ There’s not a Lark that flies, but knows
‘ You long to grasp her in your claws,
‘ The Crow you never meant to treat ;
‘ You left him what you could not eat ;
‘ And Man, who most a villain needs,
‘ Detefts you for your wicked deeds,
‘ You pilfer Duckling, Game, and Chicken,
‘ Which furnish Man with dainty picking ;
‘ There’s not a Poacher roams the wood,
‘ But who would shoot you, if he cou’d.’

Just had he said ; forth pops a Spark,
With gun and spaniel from the Park ;
The KITE he kens, with levell’d gun,
And brings the bloody boaster down.

Thus justly villains are repaid,
Who follow mischief as a trade ;
Who merit can pretend alone,
When cruel work is to be done,
To crush their kindred sort of men,
With sword, with halter, or with pen ;

Whose hollow merit is, at best,
 To seem the most, and be the least ;
 Who own no right, pursue no guide,
 But only interest, or pride ;
 Or both together do prefer,
 To run more certainly to err.
 Such always claim beyond their due,
 And always think you wrong them too ;
 Do all the wrong, yet most complain,
 Whene'er they spread the net in vain ;
 Or bait a hook, that fails to catch
 The simple Trout, for which they watch ;
 And Innocence, with squint and frown,
 Condemn for vices all their own.



FABLE III.

The DUCK and the BULRUSH.

IF Fame says true, there was a time
 When each inanimate could rhyme ;
 In times like those a BULRUSH stood,
 More tall than wise, more plump than good ;
 Lavish in his own commendations,
 Despis'd his friends and his relations ;

No titled Fop of twenty-three
Cou'd be more pert, or dull than he.
' Sure (said the vaunter) forest trees
' Beneath me are by ten degrees ;
' The Ash and Poplar boast they're strong,
' A storm can lay them all along ;
' The Oak may boast his might in vain,
' I've seen him tumbled on the plain.
' I stand the shock of wind and weather,
' Whence I may reasonably gather,
' That I am first and best of all,
' Who never yet was known to fall.'

A Duck, by chance, was waddling by,
And made this short but just reply :

' Ignoble Plant, vain Coxcomb, cease,
' Hear reason once, and hold thy peace ;
' Know that when lawless storms arise,
' The noble Oak, in patriot guise,
' Resists the tempests of the sky,
' Resolv'd to stem its rage, or die.
' The Ash and Poplar, heroes like,
' May chance to fall, but scorn to strike ;
' Did they, like thee, fawn, cringe, and bow,
' They might stand safe as thou dost now.'

Thus many a Placeman boasts his merit,
Imputes his wealth to wit and spirit,

Who, like our theme, the BULRUSH, stands,
With hollow heart, and dirty hands.



FABLE IV.

The FROG and the MOUSE.

'T WAS on a time—the Lord knows when—
In Ely, or in Lincoln fen,
A FROG and MOUSE had strong disputes,
Held in the language of the brutes,
Who of a certain pool and pasture,
Should be the sovereign and master.
' Sir,' says the FROG, (and d—mn'd his blood)
' I hold that my pretension's good,
' Nor can a brute of reason doubt it,
' For all that you can squeak about it.'
The MOUSE, averse to be o'erpow'r'd,
Gave him the lie, and call'd him Coward;
Too hard for any Frog's digestion,
To have his Frog-hood call'd in question!
A bargain instantly was made,
No Mouse of honour could evade,
On the next morn, as soon as light,
With desperate bulrushes to fight.

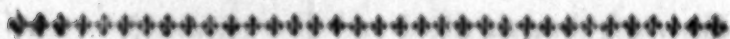
The

The morning came—and, man to man,
The grand monomachy began.
Need I recount how each bravado
Shone in montalto and passado?
To what a height their ire they carry'd,
How oft they thrust'd and they parry'd?
But as these champions kept dispensing,
Finesses in the art of fencing,
A furious Vulture took upon her,
Quick to decide this point of honour;
And, lawyer-like, to make an end on't,
Devour'd both plaintiff and defendant.

Thus often, in our British nation,
(I speak by way of application)
A lie direct, to some hot youth,
The giving which, perhaps, was truth;
The treading on a scoundrel's toe,
Or dealing Impudence her blow;
Disputes in politics and law,
About a feather, and a straw;
A thousand trifles not worth naming,
In whoring, jockeying, and gaming;
Shall cause a challenge's inditing,
And set two loggerheads a fighting.
Meanwhile the father of Despair,
The Prince of Vanity and Air,

His

His quarry, like an Hawk, discovering,
O'er their devoted heads hangs hovering,
Secure to get in his tuition,
These volunteers for black perdition,



FABLE V.

The DEVIL PAINTER.

HAPPY the favour'd man, who knows
On him what talent Heav'n bestows !
Whose life is to that sphere confin'd,
Which suits his happiest turn of mind !
The crowd, to endless error born,
Forfake their proper sphere with scorn ;
The Critic's, Poet's, Painter's name
Assume, and sweat to purchase shame ;
When Nature (for the fault is theirs)
Meant them for Aldermen or May'rs.

One dunce I knew, whom no restraint
 Could keep from pencil and from paint.
 Him Hogarth's praise had so bewitch'd,
 That ev'ry rival finger itch'd.
 He'd chalk, and daub, and stink, and smear
 From morn to night, from year to year ;

But

But still, with some unlucky touch,
Gave here too little, there too much :
Each piece he drew a monstrous birth,
Like nought in air, or seas, or earth.
Some laugh'd and some look'd grave—some sneer'd,
None prais'd—'twas spite—he persever'd.
It chanc'd the GRACES once he bought ;
'Twas Titian's piece, from Venice brought.
To copy this, but still in vain,
He try'd, gave out, and try'd again.
At length one squallid figure rose,
With goggle eyes, and crooked nose,
Distorted limbs, a Satyr's rump,
A rude, unfinish'd, shapeless lump.
Awhile his work he ey'd, then swore
He ne'er would copy Titian more.
' I'll paint,' he cry'd, ' for fame, not pelf,
' And draw originals myself.'
Strait to his piece a tail he put,
Huge curling horns, and cloven foot,
Stuck asses ears beside the face,
And to a DEVIL turn'd the GRACE :
This was indeed a master stroke,
The more deform'd, the more it spoke.
What tho' the few, whose judging eyes
The monstrous medley shape despise,
Affirm'd

Affirm'd that now 'twas like no more
To Satan, than a Grace before ;
To him, that horns, nor hoofs, nor tail
Belong—No matter—Let them rail,
The many, smit with chill amaze,
Confess the Fiend, and trembling praise ;
' How like ! 'tis Satan's self,' they cry ;
' His cloven foot, his faucer eye.'

Children ran screaming from the sight,
And women skriek'd and swoon'd with fright.
Our Artist now, elate with pride,
Looks big, and moves with stately stride ;
Contracts his brow severe and awing,
A first-rate hand—at DEVIL drawing.

Each Coxcomb thus, in nature's spite,
At wit will nibble, wrong or right.
In vain they copy and they steal,
Their folly still their jests reveal.
They rhyme—it pleases foe nor friend ;
They next to repartee descend.
'Tis dull—no laughter gains them fame ;
They fall to pun—'tis just the same.
Then, tir'd with unsuccessful gleanings
Of wit, they try at double meanings ;
In which of humour no more trace is,
Than in our goblin of the Graces ;

Yet

Yet see them, all their labours past,
 Crown'd with the wish'd success at last;
 Proud of their pow'r, with hints obscene
 To give fair Modesty the spleen,
 While all the good, polite, and wise,
 The pert, dull, graceless apes despise.



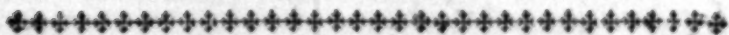
FABLE VI.

The LARK and the RED-BREAST.

AT dawn of day the Farmer rose;
 The deadly snares were set;
 A LARK with piercing cries and throes
 Was struggling in the net.
 The trembling pris'ner begg'd his life;
 ' O pity me,' he said;
 ' 'Twou'd kill my children, and my wife,
 ' To hear that I was dead.
 ' I hurt no creature; I, the whole
 ' Wood round would vouch for me;
 ' I nor thy gold nor silver stole;
 ' Let Innocence be free.
 ' One grain, indeed, this fatal morn
 ' I took;—'twas all I did;

' To

' To die for one poor grain of corn !
 ' Alas ! kind Heav'n forbid !'
 A RED-BREAST, from a neighb'ring tree,
 Beheld his hapless state ;
 ' Ah ! cease thy piteous plaints,' said she,
 ' Nor think to shun thy fate.
 ' Poor bird ! be sure thy death's decreed ;
 ' No eloquence will do ;
 ' Since he, the wretch to whom you plead,
 ' Is Judge and Party too.'



FABLE VII.

The COCK and the DOVES.

IN farmer's yard, one summer's day,
 A pair of DOVES, like Nature gay,
 Sat bill to bill ; with scornful eye,
 And haughty port, a COCK went by ;
 He went, but soon return'd again,
 And twenty Hens compos'd his train :
 He crow'd, and near the DOVES he drew,
 And rang'd his females full in view ;
 The DOVES of all regardless still ;
 Their attitude was bill to bill :

The

The Cock, impatient of the sight,
With humbled vanity and spite
Thus taunting cry'd, 'Methinks all day
'Two faithful DOVES can bill and play!
'If blest indeed, as ye pretend,
'Your bliss is vast, and without end!
'But I'm convinc'd 'tis all pretence!
'Can one to one such joys dispense?
'I, with a thousand beauties blest,
'Caressing all, by all caress'd,
'Not I can boast more bliss than you,
'If these pretended joys were true.
'Hence with your ostentatious loves!
'I hate all hypocritic DOVES!'

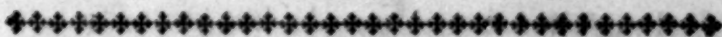
With plumage varying in the sun,
Tring rais'd his head, and thus begun:
'Abusive scorner! falsely vain!
'Unmov'd, your insult we sustain!
'Our mated loves, endear'd by truth,
'Survive the transient bloom of youth:
'Nor with the kifs our pleasure ends;
'Not Lovers only—DOVES are friends.
'Thro' life, but one our mutual aim,
'Our fears, hopes, wishes all the same:
'Unlov'd, unloving, wretched bird!
'With female rakes, a rake you herd.

'When,

• When, stung by jealousy or rage,
 • You bold and bloody combat wage,
 • Of all your train, will one stand by
 • With panting breast, and wishful eye?
 • You fall—another fills your place;
 • Most welcome still the newest face.
 As meet, her place Tring's female knew,
 (In TURTLES prudent wives we view)
 Silent she sat, with rapture high;
 Full on dear Tring was fix'd her eye.
 Yet as he finish'd, 'tis confess'd,
 She arch'd her neck, and rear'd her crest,
 As proud to own the glorious cause,
 And clapt her wings, and coo'd applause.
 • Go,' cry'd the Cock, 'my soul disdains
 • To make reply! Go! hug your chains!
 He scarce had ended, when behold
 A rival comes, both young and bold:
 His wanton wish his looks proclaim;
 With answ'ring looks the females came:
 His wish they crown'd, he crows aloud;
 His death the rival'd boaster vow'd;
 They fight, and dreadful scenes ensue,
 Their females, unconcern'd, withdrew.
 This dies; our hero maim'd survives,
 The scorn of all his twenty wives.

Opprobrious

Let others take from COCKS their cue,
And range wide Nature's common thro';
By DOVES instructed, you and I,
Each with his love can live and die.



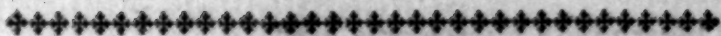
The OLD LION.

C

Th'

Th' avengers of his past destructive sway,
His barb'rous deeds are hast'ning to repay.
Attacks him first, with his sharp fangs, the Boar,
And in fierce fury tears and wounds him sore :
Next to the Boar, the bellowing Bull succeeds ;
Gor'd with his piercing horns, the tyrant bleeds :
Then the dull Ass t' inflict his vengeance flies,
And spurns th' expiring monarch, as he lies
Lab'ring and groaning under all the pains,
In these sad hours of anguish he sustains :
His bitt'rest anguish this, that, brought thus low,
He bears such insults from so mean a foe.

Let all in Pow'r, how pow'r they use, reflect,
And not oppress their people, but protect ;
For once that time arriv'd when Pow'r is lost,
The lawless tyrant finds it, to his cost,
That all combine t' express their dire dislike,
And not a hand so mean but hastes to strike.



FABLE IX.

The proud FLY.

'T WAS in the peaceful month of May,
 (No matter, Critic, for the day)
 When Phœbus had his noon attain'd,
 And in his blaze of glory reign'd,
 A FLY, as gay as e'er was seen,
 Clad o'er in azure, jet, and green,
 Gay, for his part, as birth-day beau,
 Whose soul is vanish'd into show,
 On Paul's fam'd temple chanc'd to light,
 To ease his long laborious flight.
 There, as his optics gaz'd around,
 An inch or two their utmost bound,
 He thus began: Men vainly tell
 How they in works of skill excel:
 This edifice they proudly show,
 To prove what human art can do.
 'Tis all a cheat—Before my eyes,
 What infinite disorders rise!
 Here hideous cavities appear,
 And broken precipices there:
 They never us'd the plane or line,
 But jumbled heaps, without design.

He ceas'd contemptuous : and, as Flies
 Discern with microscopic eyes,
 From what he saw, he reason'd right ;
 But how inadequate his sight,
 To mark the building from its base,
 The pillar-pomp, the sculptur'd grace,
 The dome, the cross, the golden ball,
 Much less the grand result of all !

So impious wits, with proud disdain,
 May Heav'n's mysterious ways arraign;
 View but a part, and then deny
 Th' eternal wisdom of the Sky.
 But can thy ken, presumptuous Man,
 Unfold thy Maker's boundless plan ?
 As well might insect organs see
 Th' harmonious structures rais'd by thee,
 As thine imperfect tube explore
 Thy GOD, and trace his SYSTEM o'er.

FABLE X.

The PHILOSOPHER and GLOW-WORM.

THE toilsome hours of day were spent,
 The world seem'd wrapt in calm content,
 Each anxious care forsook the breast,
 Sleep gently clos'd each eye to rest :

Cynthia

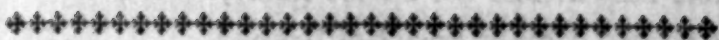
Cynthia her brightest aspect wore,
And heav'n's expanse was studded o'er.
A SAGE, by meditation drawn,
Forsook his cot, and sought the lawn :
In contemplation deep he stray'd,
And nature's dozing charms survey'd ;
On either hand new beauties view'd,
As he his tranquil walk pursu'd.
By chance, a GLOW-WORM in his way
Shone forth his little glimmering ray,
Proudly unfolding every grace,
As trailing round from place to place,
Illumining the moss-fring'd plain :
On other worms he look'd disdain.
The SAGE, with philosophic eye,
Survey'd the wanderer crawling by :
Then stooping low, with gentle hand,
High lifts him from the dewy land.

The Grub (tho' not dismay'd thro' fear)
Conscious he was not in his sphere,
Withdrew his beam of light away,
To hear what Man—vain Man would say.
The learn'd PHILOSOPHER, amaz'd,
Paus'd for some time, and anxious gaz'd ;
Astonish'd, that the Worm should die
So soon ; then careless threw it by.

‘ This creeping reptile, lo ! is dead,
‘ And with his life his glory’s fled.
‘ ’Tis so with all Ambition’s race,
‘ Who fill up each exalted place ;
‘ Brilliant they shine with borrow’d ray,
‘ And wanton in the blaze of day,
‘ Till Fortune’s second wheel turns round,
‘ And leaves them where they first were found.’

The GLOW-WORM with attention heard,
And weigh’d with prudence every word,
Trim’d bright his little lamp again,
And shone more beauteous o’er the plain ;
Then thus address’d the wond’ring SAGE ;
The known PHILOSOPHER of the age.

‘ Know thou, the happy power to shine
‘ Is truly Man’s, as well as mine.
‘ I know my sphere ; did he the same,
‘ He’d tread that path that leads to fame.
‘ Did he in dangerous times retire,
‘ And check with care ambition’s fire,
‘ Like me, he might new lustre spread,
‘ And deck with laurels fresh his head ;
‘ But, coxcomb like, he’s led astray
‘ To shine, and shines but for a day.’



FABLE XI.

The TROUT.

A TROUT, the plumpest in the tide,
 Had long the angler's skill defy'd ;
 With pleasure nibbled every bait,
 And baulk'd his sure-expected fate :
 While self-conceit inflam'd his breast,
 He, to himself, these lines address'd :
 ' How wise am I, to know my good !
 ' What cowards, half the finny brood !
 ' I feast on rarities at will ;
 ' My sense evades the latent ill.'
 He spoke : impending in the brook,
 A Gentle, wriggled on the hook,
 He nibb'd with caution, as before ;
 The dainty tempted more and more :
 Grown bold, he snapp'd the rich repast,
 And on the beard was caught at last :
 Compell'd to quit the liquid glass,
 He beat, till dead, the bending grass.

So fares the maid whom love inspires
 With tender thoughts and soft desires ;
 To whom true virtue is unknown,
 That guardian of the Fair alone.

She may awhile fan up the flame,
 And not commit an act of shame ;
 But soon longs after farther sweets,
 Pursues her wish, and ruin meets ;
 Does Wisdom's blissful precepts shun,
 Nor sees her folly, till undone,



FABLE XII.

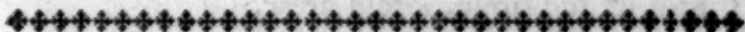
The EARTH-WORM, *and* SILK-WORM.

AN idle WORM that lives in earth,
 From whence he takes his name and birth,
 Once climbing o'er a swelling root,
 That fed the mulb'ry's luscious fruit,
 Perceiv'd th' industrious reptile there,
 Which spins the silk, that decks the fair.
 ' Poor thoughtless wretch !' the Grov'ler said,
 ' Thus still to weave the snaring thread,
 ' Thy prison still content to make,
 ' And life with all its joys forsake.
 ' To wing thy fate thy labour tends,
 ' Thou'rt buried quick, and there it ends ;
 ' At length thy shameful toil give o'er,
 ' And deck the pride of man no more.'

The

The wondrous artist thus reply'd :

‘ Let fools my labours still deride,
‘ Such lives as thine my death outweighs,
‘ Alike in merit and in praise.
‘ Tho’ in my prison I expire,
‘ Immortal fame my works acquire,
‘ And grateful beauties, when they wear
‘ This golden fleece, my name revere.
‘ Whoe’er enriches times to come,
‘ Must still be great, tho’ praise be dumb ;
‘ Who lives in benefits bestow’d,
‘ For ever lives, A DEMI-GOD.’



FABLE XIII.

The FLY and TROUT.

AS near yon stream, the other day,
Sooth'd by the murmuring current's play,
I thoughtless stroll'd along ;
Behold ! of largest growth a FLY
Adown the stream came glist'ning by,
The smaller flies among.

In

In sportive air it spread the sail,
 And, o'er the rest, the flying gale
 It caught with seeming pride ;
 Swiftly it skims the crystal waves,
 Now in the purling eddy laves,
 More smoothly now would glide.

‘ What joy !’ it said, or seem’d to say,
 ‘ Thus on the sparkling stream to play,
 ‘ And quit the fields of air !
 ‘ How dull, because on wings they rise,
 ‘ Is yonder crowd of vulgar Flies,
 ‘ To float for ever there !

‘ Still let the timid, fordid crew,
 ‘ The same old beaten track pursue,
 ‘ Nor tempt one new delight ;
 ‘ I dare to live, to live I know,
 ‘ And grasp at every joy below ;
 ‘ No fancy’d ills affright.’

While thus he tun’d his idle song,
 Borne by the crystal stream along,
 A TROUT descry’d the prize ;
 And upward darting, swift as thought,
 The vain, the boasting insect caught ;
 The boasting insect dies.

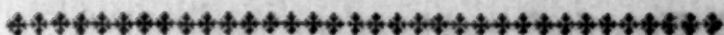
I mark'd his fate, I smote my breast,
Deep be the lesson there imprest,

Which thus my genius gave:—

“ The wretch who quits the path assign'd,

“ To taste forbidden joy, shall find

“ New ways to reach the grave.”



FABLE XIV.

The TWO DOVES.

TWO TURTLES once, a gentle kind,
In softest bands by love were join'd;
But blessings, which no pain molest,
Still languish in the wishful breast:
Till taught by fear, we seldom prize
The largest bounty of the skies.
Thus tir'd of home Columbo grew,
And pensive sigh'd for something new;
For distant realms prepar'd to part,
Thus spoke the partner of his heart:
‘ Why should my dear Columbo rove,
‘ And leave me widow'd in the grove?
‘ What ill can worse than absence be?
‘ Unkind! not absence worst to thee!

‘ Yet

- ‘ Yet let the toils, the perils, cares,
- ‘ Which fate for travellers prepares,
- ‘ Retard thy speed—attend the spring,
- ‘ And wait the zephyrs’ aiding wing ;
- ‘ What haste ? this hour’s ill omen’d found,
- ‘ The Raven’s croak was heard around ;
- ‘ Hawks, nets, and ills of every kind,
- ‘ Henceforth shall haunt my boding mind ;
- ‘ And what does Heaven at home deny,
- ‘ That thou canst wish, or Heaven supply ?’

These words in doubt Columbo hold ;
Still weakly vain and rashly bold ;
At length his restless wish prevails,
And love and fear and prudence fails ;
When thus he spoke, with chearful air :—

- ‘ From Turturella far be care,
- ‘ No more let tears those eyes distain,
- ‘ Whate’er I seek, three days shall gain ;
- ‘ Returning then, to thee I’ll tell
- ‘ Whate’er I saw, whate’er befel,
- ‘ Amusing thus the pensive day :
- ‘ Who little see, can little say ;
- ‘ Of rich description full, my tale
- ‘ Shall oft the listening ear regale ;
- ‘ The scenes I’ll paint so strong, so true,
- ‘ In fancy, thou shalt travel too.’

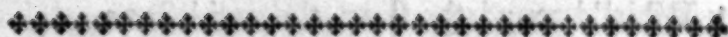
This

This said, *Farewell* dissolves his heart,
And wet with mutual tears they part.

As Turturella pensive fate,
In fancy wand'ring with her mate,
Now thought to wing far distant skies,
And mark new wonders as he flies,
Far as her utmost ken she sees
A bird approach by slow degrees;
Nor form'd for flight he seem'd, nor song;
But stopp'd by turns, and limp'd along.
The bird for chang'd Columbo known,
Her pains who feels can tell alone.
Down from her nest she flew to meet
Her mate; with mutual tears they greet;
Fit shelter (for no more he flies)
The hollow of a tree supplies:
Awhile with silent grief oppress'd,
At length the Dove her mate address'd;
' O tell me, dear Columbo! tell
' What scenes you saw, what woes befel;
' Why wounded thus Columbo mourns,
' And ere th' appointed day returns?'
With faltering voice Columbo cry'd,
' From thee no more my heart I hide;
' Scarce from this peaceful grove I past,
' When sudden clouds the skies o'ercast;
' I saw

‘ I saw the storm ; for shelter sought,
‘ A simple tree that shelter brought ;
‘ Thin-leav’d, and pervious to the shower,
‘ I felt the rig’rous season’s power :
‘ The cloud dissolv’d, benumb’d with cold,
‘ Again my dripping wings unfold :
‘ In neighbouring fields some corn I view,
‘ And hovering near a Turtle too ;
‘ By flattering hopes deluded there,
‘ I struggled in the fowler’s snare !
‘ The Turtle tutor’d to betray,
‘ Beneath the bait a net there lay.
‘ Unwonted strength despair supply’d,
‘ I broke the snare my feet that ty’d ;
‘ With less than half my tail I fled,
‘ And trail’d behind a broken thread,
‘ A remnant of the snare, when lo !
‘ A Vulture sees me, dreadful foe !
‘ Just as he stoop’d to snatch the prey,
‘ From heaven an Eagle wing’d his way ;
‘ I, while the sons of rapine fight,
‘ Improv’d the lucky hour in flight ;
‘ The ruins of a cot were near ;
‘ I thought my dangers ended here ;
‘ Deceitful thought ! a playful boy
‘ (The cruel race in sport destroy)
‘ Whirl’d

‘ Whirl’d round the sling, the rapid stone
‘ Laid bare my pinion to the bone ;
‘ Yet reach I living this abode ;
‘ What *signal mercies* Heaven bestow’d !—
‘ Left in this grove to sigh alone,
‘ What fate has Turturella known ?’
 ‘ More *signal* yet by far,’ said she,
‘ The *mercies* Heaven bestow’d on me.’—
‘ Alas ! what woes,’ Columbo cry’d
‘ In this short absence hast thou try’d ?
‘ What near escapes, to equal mine ?
‘ Amazing marks of love divine !’—
‘ The woes averted from my head
‘ Are those which thou hast felt,’ she said ;
‘ *These* are the *mercies* that I meant,
‘ Which Heaven to give me, gave CONTENT !’
 Learn hence the gifts of JOVE to prize ;
And, ere misfortunes teach, be wise.



FABLE XV.

The MALE-CONTENT reformed.

A CAMEL once, with plenty blest,
 And health and ease, and youth and rest,
 Seem'd for life's every joy design'd;
 Yet wanted still content of mind;
 He knew not yet that art of arts,
 To taste the good, the Now imparts;
 But fancy would for ever roam
 For bliss she overlook'd at home:
 He wish'd a thousand useless things,
 Now sigh'd for wool, and now for wings;
 But horns at length ingross'd his mind,
 For these in silent woe he pin'd;
 ' But why for these impatient grown?
 ' Are horns deny'd to thee alone?'—
 ' No—but the beasts of smaller size
 ' (Beneath their care) the Gods despise;
 ' But me, so graceful, noble, tall,
 ' Why would not Jove indulge with all?
 ' He will, if I prefer my prayer,
 ' For I am Heaven's peculiar care.'
 Resolv'd at length, to Jove he bends,
 And thus th' unhallow'd prayer ascends:

' Oh

- ‘ Oh mighty Jove ! with gracious eye
- ‘ My wants regard, those wants supply.
- ‘ Behold yon Goats, and Stags, and Kine,
- ‘ (Those far inferior works of thine)
- ‘ What beauteous arms adorn their brows,
- ‘ Yet Jove to me no arms allows ;
- ‘ Oh let this gift my head adorn !
- ‘ Be thine the praise, and mine the horn !

The Godhead heard, and from above
 Thus sounds severe the voice of love :—
 ‘ Presumptuous beast ! thy suit forbear,
 ‘ Know, all my works my bounty share ;
 ‘ All that was best for thee was thine,
 ‘ For what should Jove’s good-will confine ?
 ‘ But on thy back henceforth shall be
 ‘ A badge of rash impiety !’

He ceas’d ; the skies around him close,
 And strait th’ opprobrious hump arose.
 The wretch now own’d he late possess’d,
 What suited with his station best ;
 Yet, erring as before, complain’d,
 That on his back the bunch remain’d.

- ‘ Since I repent,’ said he, ‘ my pray’r,
- ‘ Sure Jove this punishment might spare.’

With kind concern these murmurs heard,
 The reasoning Elephant appear’d—

D

‘ What

‘ What fool,’ said he, ‘ can think that Jove
‘ To punish thee foregoes his love ?
‘ Come let thy pray’r (I heard it made)
‘ Be with impartial judgment weigh’d :
‘ If other words the sense impart,
‘ This was the language of thy heart :—
‘ O Jove, thou either didst not know
‘ What thou to bless me shouldst bestow ;
‘ Or want of goodness, or of power,
‘ Prevents the blessing to this hour.
‘ But, since thou’rt late inform’d by me,
‘ That horns will with my state agree,
‘ Be kind for once, and, if Jove can,
‘ Give what I ask, and mend thy plan.—
‘ Allow this prayer was vile and vain,
‘ This sense thy murmurs still contain :
‘ Did Jove become less good or wise,
‘ When late he will’d thy back to rise ?
‘ If not, all-wise unerring love,
‘ In all its works we must approve.—
‘ First, had you gain’d the boon you fought,
‘ Fresh care another wish had brought,
‘ And that fulfill’d, an endless train
‘ Had made thy very *Being* vain,
‘ Except to keep one breast on fire,
‘ With all the pangs of wild desire ;

‘ But,

- ‘ But, stopp’d in this career at first,
- ‘ With wool and wings and horns uncurs’d ;
- ‘ Search but within, you still shall find
- ‘ The bliss you seek in peace of mind.
- ‘ But why thus punish’d would you know ?
- ‘ ’Tis not vindictive wrath to show ;
- ‘ That sapient love, which horns deny’d,
- ‘ Has to thy back that lump apply’d,
- ‘ That this might mental temp’rance teach,
- ‘ To those my lectures cannot reach ;
- ‘ This, the whole forest shall prevent
- ‘ From feeling thy keen discontent ;
- ‘ Never for tail shall ask the *Ape*,
- ‘ Or *Bear* the *Greyhound*’s slender shape ;
- ‘ But, trusting Heav’n’s peculiar care,
- ‘ Remain contented as they are.’

Abash’d the Camel left the place,
His mind improv’d by this disgrace,
And never more, at Fancy’s call,
Instructed Jove to rule the ball.



FABLE XVI.

The two HUNGRY FOXES.

TWO hungry FOXES once agreed,
 To execute a bloody deed,
 And make the Farmer's poultry bleed.
 Thus, as their rage was very hot,
 Cocks, Hens, and Chickens went to pot.

}

The one (the slaughter being o'er)
 Young, and a perfect epicure,
 Propos'd on all the spoil to sup,
 And at one meal to eat it up.
 The other old, at heart a miser,
 Refus'd his scheme, and thought it wiser
 To lay aside some of the prey,
 And so provide for a bad day.

' Listen, my child !' says he, ' to Age
 ' For 'tis experience makes me sage :
 ' I know the various turns of fate ;
 ' How changeable is every state !
 ' A mighty treasure we have found,
 ' Success has all our wishes crown'd,
 ' See ! the vast havoc all around !

}

' O let

‘ O let us not be lavish, son,
 ‘ Nor throw away what we have won !
 ‘ O let us not consume our store,
 ‘ But, being frugal, make it more.’
 ‘ Your fine harangue,’ replies the other,
 ‘ Might take, were I a griping brother ;
 ‘ But, as I’m generous and free,
 ‘ It ne’er shall have effect on me.
 ‘ I’ll live, old daddy, while I may,
 ‘ Indulge my noble self with prey,
 ‘ And feast, in spite of all you say.
 ‘ But should I not—why (to our sorrow)
 ‘ The fowls will stink before to-morrow.
 ‘ If we return, the clown will watch us ;
 ‘ And (hang the dog) he’ll surely catch us ;
 ‘ In ambush he will watch our waters,
 ‘ Or else with dogs beat up our quarters.’

}

This said, each Fox himself obey’d,
 Pursu’d the scheme that he had laid.
 The younger one fell to the meat ;
 And died o’ercharg’d with what he eat.
 The old one, as with joy, next morning,
 To his hid spoil he was returning,
 Ta’en by the Farmer in surprise,
 Fell by his hand a sacrifice.

Thus each man has his ruling passion,
 And every age its darling inclination :

THE YOUNG are heedless in their measures,
 And boundless in pursuit of pleasures;
 THE OLD are all persuasion past,
 Stiff, positive, and griping to the last.



FABLE XVII.

The BULL-FINCH *and* DAW.

A BULL-FINCH, who his talents try'd
 With good success, but more of pride,
 As gobbling, strutting, *Turkey* vain;
 Each Bird the mark of his disdain;
 Admir'd and fear'd, where'er he sung,
 Perch'd near a DAW, and thus begun:
 ' See! joys compleat on me bestow'd,
 ' With pers'nal charms, and parts endow'd;
 ' But feather'd sages sure agree,
 ' That Nature nodded forming thee:
 ' Aukward, alert, with whims thy head
 ' Mercurial mounts, but drops in lead.
 ' Thy shape, thy hue, our sight offend;
 ' Thy short, shrill accents none commend,
 ' Not so absurd the hooting Owl;
 ' But gravely he, thou pertly dull!'

Abash'd

Abash'd the DAW, with satire stung,
Jabber'd, and caw'd, and bit his tongue;
To hollow tree, his seat, withdrew,
Still sputtering anger as he flew;
With fickle wing soon chang'd his place,
A chimney cover'd his disgrace:
Here fix'd he scorns, with heedless ear,
The sounds that reach his hollow sphere,
The tittering voice, or hasty calling,
Dog's snap abrupt, or Puss's squalling,
Alternate fugues of scolding tongues,
Or sem'-briefs bray'd from Asses lungs.
With better strains, at length, he heard
A pipe instruct a tutor'd bird,
Catching the song with tuneful throat,
And echoing back each rival note.
Thus charm'd, he from his dark abode
Invited, tries th' advent'rous road;
Downright he flounders on; his sight
Is hid in momentary night.
But gloomy fears and perils ending,
To spacious lightsome room descending,
Rewarded with what glad surprise!
Imprison'd there the FINCH he spies,
Swinging betwixt the floor and cieling,
A cage, his pendent airy dwelling.

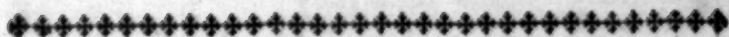
A gilded ball shone o'er his head,
 Thick wires, like rays, around him spread;
 A turf beneath his foot was found,
 In miniature a verdant ground:
 Seeds here conceal'd, there grounsel seen,
 There plantain stalks were wove between;
 Water, with streaks of saffron dy'd,
 Rich draughts from crystal fount supply'd:
 A shew of bliss his state express'd,
 Tho' splendid servitude at best.

But now what refuge, or relief,
 Can hide his shame, or sooth his grief,
 While standing oft disclos'd before him,
 With hateful form, oft hov'ring o'er him,
 Clapping his footy wings, his foe
 Adds insults to the captive's woe?

'Where's now,' cries he, 'thy scorn or boast?
 'What's wit or beauty, freedom lost?
 'Tho' gay thy prison, firm its hold;
 'Thy fetters gall tho' made of gold.
 'Hence, warbling slave, be this thy strain,
 'Thy excellence but proves thy bane:
 'While I in my defects am blest'd,
 'Thou still art wretched, tho' carest'd.'

The MEANEST thanks to Nature owe;
 And chance can bring the VAINEST low!

FABLE



FABLE XVIII.

The NIGHTINGALE.

A NIGHTINGALE, in her retreat,
 Exerted all her native powers ;
 Compos'd and sung plaintively sweet,
 To charm away the silent hours.

A hungry Hawk in ambush lay,
 And seiz'd the hapless songster for his prey ;
 The warbling victim try'd in vain,
 To melt a cruel tyrant's heart ;
 Proof against every moving strain
 Of nature, or of art.

‘ Charmer,’ said he, ‘ I wait too long,
 ‘ Hawks require food more solid than a song ;’
 Then with a villain's smile he struck
 The loveliest tenant of the wood ;
 In her poor heart his beak he stuck,
 Rioting in her vital blood.

Listen, ye fair-ones, to my lay,
 Your ways with trembling caution mark !

I

How

How many virgins fall a prey
To some base murderer in the dark !

Your youth, your tears, your spotless fame,
Add to the brutal fire fresh fuel;
Deaf to compassion, dead to shame,
For selfishness is always cruel.

Ye candid souls, whose pulses beat,
With no distemper'd selfish heat,
View here again a wretch oppress'd,
And heav'n and earth in vain implor'd ;
Robb'd of his property and rest,
Devour'd by a rapacious Lord.

When Avarice and Power meet,
Woe to the humble neighbour of the Great.



FABLE XIX.

The Way to HAPPINESS.

TWO Mice of wit, who clearly saw,
That Paunch was God, and Will was Law,
Disdaining whims by dotards taught,
Of joys possess'd in secret thought,

Resolv'd

Resolv'd that self their views should bound,
And each intemperate wish be crown'd;
Of every scheme preferring this,
To crowd life's scanty span with bliss:
And now, their diff'ring tastes to please,
One fought for pomp, and one for ease;
The first soon found (so fortune will'd)
A prelate's pantry nobly fill'd,
Where nature lay disguis'd in art,
And either India in a tart:
From the chief bed some down he stole,
Of pow'r to lull a titled soul;
On this he slept amid his store,
And what could his ambition more?
But frequent revels thro' the house,
Amid this plenty starv'd the Mouse;
E'en at the noon of peaceful night
Awak'd, he'd start with wild affright.
Resolv'd at length these woes to end,
He sighing went to seek his friend,
Whom in a barn, retir'd from noise,
He thought possess'd the calmest joys;
He reach'd the place—a sylvan scene,
For ever calm, for ever green,
And, while new hopes distend his breast,
These thoughts his anxious friend express'd:

‘ Alas !

‘ Alas ! to this devoted place,
‘ The seat of dulness and disgrace,
‘ Thy feet what wayward fortune drew ?
‘ I just was setting out to you.—
‘ Those scenes pleas’d once, but now they tire,
‘ No new delights awake desire.
‘ With solitude and silence curst,
‘ With grief I pine, with spleen I burst,
‘ And, would you know the fears I feel ?
‘ Yon Owl designs me for a meal.’—

He ceas’d—his guest in turn repeats
The plague of pomp, and plenty’s seats :
Then both agreed, in sad despair,
To run from thence, they knew not where.
With anguish long they devious stray’d,
And reach’d at length a lonely glade ;
It seem’d a place where silence taught
Ethereal paths to tow’ring thought ;
But soon soft airs melodious rise,
And music lives, and silence dies ;
Smit with surprise, they track’d the sound,
And white with age a linnet found.
Wond’ring they ask’d, those glooms among,
What joys could prompt the jocund song ?
At such an age, in such a place,
What stamps that pleasure on his face ?

The

The Bird reply'd—' An exile here,
' I smile secure from care and fear,
' O'er youthful scenes reflection strays,
' And I re-live my pristine days,
' When active virtue, love sincere,
' Beam'd joy around my scanty sphere,
' When full those joys to me return'd,
' And in my breast reflected burn'd :
' Nor mourn I that advent'rous song
' Which durst accuse the Great of wrong,
' Tho' Pow'r incens'd, with stern decree,
' For truths invidious banish'd me.
' And now serene for death I wait,
' Nor fear th' expected hand of fate;
' For there are shades beyond the sky,
' Where birds on sweeter gales shall fly;
' Where endless youth shall fill my veins,
' And joy shall prompt immortal strains :
' These hopes uncloud my parting day,
' And age still chaunts a chearful lay.'

Convinc'd, yet wond'ring, smit with truth,
The wanderers mourn'd departed youth,
Conscious their search for joy was vain,
They saw the Bird the prize obtain;
And one, with strange impulse, began
To counsel thus, both Mouse and Man.

' No

‘ No joys of sense like conscious goodness please,
‘ More bright than glory, and more soft than ease;
‘ In prospect those enchant the treach’rous eye,
‘ Yet when approach’d illusive fleet and die.
‘ Still others spring, still please and cheat the same,
‘ While hop’d for—mountains, when possess’d—
a name !

‘ So charms a cloud with ev’ry colour gay,
‘ When from afar it breaks the seven-fold ray;
‘ But if we reach it, we discern no more
‘ The flatt’ring vapour so admir’d before.
‘ ’Tis virtue reigning in the generous heart,
‘ Alone can true substantial bliss impart;
‘ ’Tis this strong beaming, tho’ our noon be past,
‘ Bids life’s short day be splendid to the last;
‘ Charms pain and sickness in the Saint and Sage,
‘ And melts to joy the hoar of freezing age;
‘ In want, content (unenvy’d wealth) bestows,
‘ In sickness patience, and in pomp repose :
‘ All wonders rise at her invoking breath,
‘ A life of rapture, from the womb of death.’



FABLE XX.

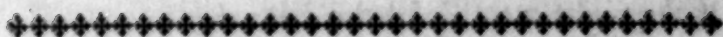
The LOOKING-GLASS *and* ORANGE-TREE.

IN an apartment where expence
Appear'd in full magnificence,
A LOOKING-GLASS, of neatest taste,
Within the middle pannel plac'd,
Gather'd from Sol's meridian blaze
Th' assemblage of his scatter'd rays,
And shot (in borrow'd splendor bright)
Across the room a flood of light.
High on a stand of sattin-wood,
An ORANGE-TREE obliquely stood,
Whom thus, of fancy'd power possess'd,
The self-conceited GLASS address'd :
' By my kind influence behold
' How fair thy tender buds unfold,
' Which, but for all my soft'ring ray,
' Their beauties never would display.
' Should not such gay expanded bloom,
' Such pleasing verdure, high perfume,
' Thy mind with grateful rapture raise,
' To render some return of praise ;

‘ Such

‘ Such as may speak both love and awe,
‘ Lest I my influence withdraw ?’
‘ Nought can thy judgment more misguide
‘ Than pride’ the ORANGE-TREE reply’d ;
‘ But for that passion, thou would’st know,
‘ I nothing to thy influence owe ;
‘ All the perfections which you name,
‘ From yonder glorious orb I claim,
‘ The same whose partial beams, I see,
‘ Shine with such radiance on thee,
‘ And but for whose imparting light,
‘ Thou hadst remain’d as dark as night :
‘ Then scorn not the advice I give :—
‘ With gratitude those beams receive ;
‘ But think not any merit thine,
‘ Who only by reflection shine.’

If to thy happy lot ’tis given,
To be the instrument of heav’n,
Reflect that thou canst nought dispense,
But that which thou receiv’dst from thence.



The BULLFINCH *and the* SPARROW.

As on the rake, one winter's day,
A town-bred SPARROW wing'd his way,
Possess'd of each engaging art
To win the feather'd fair one's heart,
To all his rivals still prefer'd,
The fav'rite of each female bird ;
He lighted near an ancient seat,
Whose turrets mark the 'Squire's retreat ;
The mansion, where resides his Honour,
The Lord and Guardian of the Manor ;

E

Or

Or the right worshipful the Mayor,
 Whose Corporation's all his care.
 Here, hopping round from tree to tree,
 Curious, no doubt, to hear and see,
 A BULLFINCH, from a window nigh,
 Attracted the young rover's eye.
 Struck with the warbler's gilded cage,
 He glow'd with envy, grief, and rage.

‘ How partial,’ he exclaim’d, ‘ is Fate !
 ‘ See how that BULLFINCH lives in state,
 ‘ The happiest of the feather’d race :
 ‘ How diff’rent, the poor SPARROW’s case !
 ‘ There, shelter’d from the winds and rain,
 ‘ He chaunts at ease his warbling strain ;
 ‘ While I sit shivering in the shower,
 ‘ Expos’d, thro’ each inclement hour,
 ‘ To nipping frosts, or melting snows :
 ‘ Ills that no pamper’d BULLFINCH knows !
 ‘ He, cherish’d at a sumptuous board,
 ‘ Is lodg’d and feasted like a lord ;
 ‘ Fondled, and by his master fed,
 ‘ With sweetest cakes and whitest bread ;
 ‘ While after me the village runs,
 ‘ With pelting stones, and popping guns,
 ‘ Forc’d by such barb’rous sport to fly,
 ‘ A miserable wand’rer I,

‘ In

‘ In the more hospitable wood
 ‘ Pick up and down, precarious food.
 ‘ Hard lot ! alas ! how diff’rent mine,
 ‘ Compar’d, thrice happy bird ! with thine.
 ‘ Why, cruel fate ! live I to rue
 ‘ I was not hatch’d a BULLFINCH too ?’

The FINCH, in quite a well-bred way,
 Heard what our SPARROW had to say ;
 And understood him, tho’ at distance,
 Without the interpreter’s assistance:
 Indeed, a bird, not quite a fool,
 Brought up in so polite a school,
 Could not be thought in want of learning :
 A word’s enough to the discerning.
 Smiling to find the awkward blunder
 The foolish fellow labour’d under ;
 He, therefore, pluming up his crest,
 The envious grumbler thus address’d :—
 ‘ Sure, friend,’ says he, ‘ you’re touch’d in brain,
 ‘ To talk in this mistaken strain ;
 ‘ ’Tis true, there’s something of a smattering
 ‘ Of wit, in what you have been chattering :
 ‘ But, chirp as sprightly as you will,
 ‘ Trust me, you reason very ill ;
 ‘ And, to be serious for a while,
 ‘ In truth, your envy makes me smile.

' What is there in this fine gilt cage,
 ' So much your fancy should engage ?
 ' These wires my prison-bars, where I,
 ' A splendid slave, must live and die !
 ' Go hence content, and learn of me
 ' How vain the finery you see :
 ' Forbear my joys true blifs to call ;
 ' Thy LIBERTY is worth them all.'



FABLE XXII.

The PENITENT ROSE.

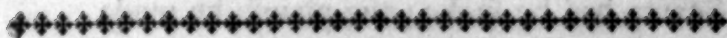
'T WAS at the close of setting day,
 When eve puts on her soberest grey,
 And birds, as fifty bards have said,
 Steal homewards peaceably to bed ;
 That Sall was order'd to prepare,
 Her master's stool and elbow chair ;
 To keep the china flower-pot sweet,
 And throw the Roses in the street.
 The word thus given, the ruthless jade
 Her cruel orders soon obey'd,
 And in a moment turn'd about,
 And threw them all unkindly out.

Oppress'd

Oppress'd with more than common woes,
A groan escap'd the largest ROSE ;
A tear stole down her fading cheek,
And thus she spoke, or strove to speak :—
' O wretched hour ! and is this all ?
' And am I thus condemn'd to fall ?
' Was it for this my crimson hues
' So oft imbib'd the morning dew's ?
' Was it for this I strove to seize
' The flying Zephyr's softest breeze ?
' And every day with caution drest,
' To let the sun-beam kiss my breast,
' And rose superior on the thorn,
' To vie in blushes with the morn ?
' O that I ne'er had wish'd to roam,
' Nor ever left my former home !
' But closely kept my native tree,
' My humble stalk and favourite bee !
' Peace then on every wish would wait,
' And find me happy, tho' not great,
' Bestow content to bless my hours,
' And mark me foremost of the flow'rs !
' Be ever curst, unthinking Pride,
' That first could draw my heart aside ;
' And teach this faithless breast to prove,
' A guilty spark of second love ;

‘ Delude me from my home so far,
‘ To wed a painted china jar ;
‘ A little fop, who, day and night,
‘ Kept twenty roses in my sight ;
‘ And now, O shame to be express !
‘ Has turn’d me out with all the rest !—
‘ Yet howsoe’er I think it hard,
‘ It is, alas ! a just reward ;
‘ For she who could through interest leave
‘ An honest worthy youth to grieve ;
‘ Or wed the man she ought to hate,
‘ For titles, pomp, or empty state,
‘ In public scorn and shame should pine,
‘ And always meet a fate like mine.’

More the ill-fated ROSE had said,
But, turning round her sickly head,
A coach, that held a furious rate,
Drove by, and crush’d her into fate,



FABLE XXIII.

The MISER, his SON, and the MICE.

A MISER went to view his store;
 His gold lay scatter'd on the floor:
 With wild affright he stamps and stares,
 And shakes his reverend silver hairs.
 ' Is it for this, for this,' he cry'd,
 ' My wants and pleasures were deny'd?
 ' For this, contrive to breed delay,
 ' Send tradesfolks back without their pay?
 ' Shall Charity so often sue,
 ' And Gratitude, and Friendship too?
 ' Nay even Nature's self implore
 ' To let my children share my store?
 ' Now thieves, base thieves, profusely part
 ' The gold I valu'd at my heart.
 ' What have I lost? how much is stole?
 ' My bags are torn! and torn my soul.
 ' The window's safe; they came not there—
 ' Had they ta'en all, they'd ta'en my care:
 ' This very moment will I run,
 ' And give it to my injur'd Son;
 ' For Av'rice ne'er can make amends,
 ' For conscience hurt, and loss of friends.'

Scarce had he spoke ; the plaints he made
Reach'd his Son's ears, who flew to aid
His hoary Sire : ' Say, Sir, what grief ? '—
The Father told the tale in brief.
And now they carefully look o'er
The bolts and locks of every door :
How tight the fastenings ! how secure !
' 'Twas Fairies,' cries the Son, ' that's sure ;
' We'll find the sprites out in a trice—
' Let's see the bags—the thieves are MICE !
The MICE, who own'd the mischief done,
Now boldly from the crannies run,
' See here,' cries one, ' the injur'd MICE,
' Who, by your avarice and vice,
' Were almost starv'd, and forc'd to eat
' Your money bags for want of meat,
' Because you kept so poor a house,
' As we can prove would starve a Mouse !'
' See, Sir, what cares,' the Son rejoin'd,
' What idle fears disturb your mind ;
' This penance you inflict yourself—
' What whips ! what scourges ! is your self !
' Your children want a moderate share ;
' Divide your riches and your care ;
' No better time can ever offer,
' Unload your conscience and your coffer.'

The Miser whin'd, ' Had thieves been here,
 ' It might occasion cares and fear;
 ' But, as I find so safe my store,
 ' I shall give way to fear no more;
 ' For, since my doors so strong are found,
 ' I'll keep my money and sleep sound.'

The Son went pennylefs to rest,
 The Father rose, and watch'd his cheft.

FABLE XXIV.

The two FOXES.

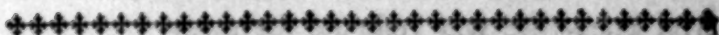
TWO FOXES, as the times were hard,
 And farmers kept their hen-rooft barr'd,
 Agreed to take a different round,
 And share whatever could be found.
 ' Perhaps' says one, ' kind Fortune may
 ' Throw a fat Turkey in your way;
 ' Or may be it shall be my luck
 ' To find a wand'ring Goose or Duck:
 ' But, as 'tis odds that you and me
 ' Both find a meal, we'll e'en agree
 ' To share together what we find,
 ' So let's set out, and never mind.

' I only

‘ I only wish my lot may be
‘ To serve my friend—not he serve me.’
Each took the way he thought the best,
One travell’d east, the other west :
Both were so lucky, in a trice,
To light on something very nice ;
This eat a Goose, while that was picking
The tender breast-bone of a Chicken ;
For both resolv’d, howe’er unjust,
To quiet his own hunger first.
But had there been a Chicken more,
Than they could possibly devour ;
Both REYNARDS had been highly pleas’d,
T’ have seen a hungry friend appeas’d.
But, as they could not so contrive it,
Each hop’d his comrade would survive it,
So home they went, with dismal faces ;
Cries one, ‘ I’ve try’d the likeliest places,
‘ But not a morsel to be had
‘ Of any sort, nor good nor bad.—
‘ And, pray now, how did you succeed ?’
‘ Why just like you.’—‘ That’s bad indeed !’
So both, with hypocritic face,
Bewail’d together their hard case,
Each pity’d each, approv’d the jest,
And each believ’d he far’d the best,

Thus

Thus villains, for their private ends,
Will disappoint their dearest friends;
They use the sacred name to cheat,
And make their villainy compleat,



FABLE XXV.

The two ANTS.

A Cart-wheel, with a cumb'rous load,
Crush'd flat an Ant-hill in its road:
Close press'd the num'rous insects lay;
O'erwhelm'd, whole cities now gave way:
Down sunk inhabitants and town;
Ten thousand dwellings were beat down,
Two ANTS alone had power to creep
From out the dismal slaughter'd heap;
From diff'rent turns of mind these two,
With diff'rent eyes their suff'rings view:
One, swell'd with hope, saw Ant-hills rise,
By fancy's aid, with fresh supplies;
In some new state herself had fix'd,
And in their commonwealth had mix'd.
The other, grief had more depress'd,
Sorrow sat heavier on her breast;

She

She griev'd she'd sunk not with the state,
 And only wish'd she had shar'd their fate:
 That Fortune only held her up
 To dash more bitters in her cup ;
 That Chance had miseries still in store,
 And knew she was reserv'd for more.

The ANT who bore affliction best,
 Thus spoke, and soft her friend address'd :

- ' I grieve to see how ill you bear
- ' The nat'ral evils all must share :
- ' Earthquake, and famine, shipwreck, storm,
- ' The happiness of Man deform ;
- ' All evils which they can't prevent,
- ' By Providence to mortals sent.
- ' But weak imaginary fears,
- ' Unjust suspicion, froward tears,
- ' Aversion to the good that's left,
- ' As if of ev'ry thing bereft,
- ' Are evils of a different kind,
- ' And may be rooted from the mind.
- ' All this I heard a wise man say,
- ' Who blew me from his hand away,
- ' From whence I reach'd my hill once more,
- ' Which I despair'd of quite before ;
- ' From him I learnt, that danger's near
- ' When we perhaps see least to fear ;

' And,

‘ And, when we seem o’erwhelm’d with woe,
 ‘ The torrent stops, and pleasures flow.’

Thus those who bear with steady mind,
 The evils to their state assign’d,
 Must suffer less than those who moan
 At trivial sufferings of their own.



FABLE XXVI.

The PEASANT and LORD.

OPPRESS’D by sickness, debts, and duns,
 His Lordship to the country runs,
 In hopes to find that comfort there,
 Which fortune had deny’d him here;
 Reluctant leaves the seat of Vice,
 Assemblies, operas, cards, and dice,
 To breathe awhile in silent shades,
 And trifle with the country maids.

It chanc’d, as on a summer’s morn
 He bent his steps across the lawn;
 Sweet sung the birds on ev’ry spray,
 The laughing meadows all look’d gay;
 With mind unruffled, and at ease,
 Across a neigh’bring mead he sees

A Lab’rer

A Lab'rer come with cheerful smile,
Who whistling fought his daily toil ;
Health's ruddy hue his face o'erspread,
Tho' silver locks adorn'd his head.

As round the humid hay he flung,
Blithe as the Lark he gayly sung
His honest lays, which plainly show'd,
His heart with sweet contentment glow'd.
The Peer with envious eyes beheld
The Clown, and thus, with rancour fill'd :—

‘ Peace, slave ! for once let manners curb
‘ Thy noise, nor my repose disturb ;
‘ Thy ill-tim'd merriment give o'er,
‘ Nor dare offend my ears thus more,
‘ Or soon, thou Clod, I'll make thee know,
‘ What reverence to a LORD is due.’

‘ What thou a LORD !’ replies the Swain,
With looks of pity, and disdain ;
‘ And canst thou think, tho' poor, that I
‘ Will with thy proud commands comply ?
‘ Know, tho' obscure and mean my lot,
‘ The tenant of yon lowly cot,
‘ I boast an honest life well spent :
‘ In recompence for which, Content
‘ Gilds ev'ry hour with calm delight,
‘ And tells me I have acted right.

‘ With

' With rev'rence I my Maker serve,
 ' Nor from his precepts ever swerve ;
 ' This golden rule keep still in view,
 ' To do as I'd have others do.
 ' Full threescore years I on these plains
 ' Have liv'd respected by the swains,
 ' A life of innocence have led,
 ' And earn'd by toil, my daily bread ;
 ' For which indulgence, gracious Heav'n
 ' Has plenty, independence giv'n ;
 ' Of these possess'd, know, in one word,
 ' I'm greater—happier than a Lord.'

Struck with the home-felt truth, the Peer
 Sneak'd silent off—with haughty sneer ;
 Unmindful—Hodge snatch'd up his fork,
 And cheerfully pursu'd his work.

FABLE XXVII.

The LADY and the ROSE.

AS SYLVIA walk'd at early day,
 To breathe the fragrant sweets of May,
 She stopp'd at ev'ry blushing flower,
 To brush away the pearly show'r,

And

And rais'd its tender drooping stem,
 O'ercharg'd with many a shining gem.
 And now, from ev'ry bush that blows,
 She crops the fairest bud that grows,
 And makes the fragrant violet bed
 Contrast its sweets with roses red;
 And, ranging purple lilacs bright,
 With white-rob'd lilies fair as light,
 She wove, in honour of the May,
 A blooming chaplet fresh and gay.
 She view'd the wreath: 'Alas!' she said,
 'Should no rude hand your fragrance shed,
 ' Your short-liv'd charms would soon decay
 ' With some rude blast, or scorching ray;
 ' Your nice-ting'd beauties all would fade,
 ' Or die unseen beneath the shade.'

An envious ROSE, who look'd disdain,
 To hear a rival's pitying strain,
 (For who observes the blushing ROSE,
 When SYLVIA's cheeks more charms disclose?)
 A strain! which Misery scarce can bear,
 Commiserates, in her turn, the Fair:—
 'Vain Nymph, who twin'st that chaplet gay,
 ' You hope to see another May;
 ' You hope to sit some shade beneath,
 ' And weave again the flow'ry wreath:

' How

‘ How rash the thought ! how frail your state !
‘ Perhaps the pale-ey’d sisters wait,
‘ With scissars keen, to fix your fate. }
‘ Perhaps that blooming wreath, she said,
‘ Which you have doom’d so soon to fade,
‘ These purple violets’ faint perfume,
‘ May send your roses to the tomb.
‘ Then triumph not o’er short-liv’d flowers,
‘ With pores and fibres fine as ours ;
‘ For many a flower has strew’d the way
‘ Before the hearse of maidens gay,
‘ And near the grave has cheering Spring
‘ Made many a flower to bloom again.’

Thus oft we fix another’s fate,
Nor think our own so short a date ;
Hope calmly lulls our fears to rest,
And makes us think our state the best.

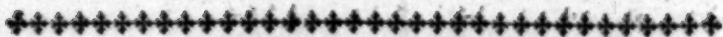


FABLE XXVIII.

The PEACOCK and the NIGHTINGALE.

A PEACOCK, lovely to behold,
 Display'd his feathers fring'd with gold;
 His beauteous neck was sometimes green,
 And then a bluish cast was seen;
 His tail with purple beauty glow'd,
 Or chang'd more various as it flow'd;
 And such a neck, and such a train,
 Might well excuse a Bird's being vain;
 But not content with beauteous dyes,
 And flowing train with spotted eyes,
 He cried, (and stretch'd his glistening throat)
 ' I envy Nightingales their note.
 ' Had Nature judg'd the matter right,
 ' We had charm'd the ear, as well as sight,
 ' And been a creature, in creation,
 ' The most deserving admiration.'
 Perch'd on a bough above his head,
 A NIGHTINGALE heard all he said:
 ' Is that your wish?' with rage she cried,
 ' Thou strutting thing, made up of pride!
 ' What!

‘ What ! take the only gift that nature
‘ Bestows upon your fellow-creature !
‘ Suppose you had been a Sparrow born,
‘ A bird ne’er mention’d but with scorn ;
‘ And liv’d like them, in more disgrace
‘ Than any of the feather’d race ?
‘ You have plumage to allure the sight ;
‘ My voice and notes afford delight ;
‘ We both may boast our share of merit ;
‘ And yet your proud, ungen’rous spirit,
‘ Dissatisfied with plumage gay,
‘ Would take my love-tun’d voice away :
‘ Were I as foolish and as vain,
‘ Should not I want your flowing train ?
‘ Look round the world, and learn to know,
‘ Others have greater wants than you :
‘ You’re kept, admir’d, esteem’d, and fed ;
‘ And thus your beauty serves instead
‘ Of thrilling notes, and sweet-tun’d voice ;
‘ So be contented, and rejoice.’



FABLE XXIX.

The SAGE, the BOY, and BUTTERFLY.

FIRST mark'd on Wisdom's roll, a SAGE,
The Plato of this modern age,
Secluded far from courts—from strife,
Breath'd with content a rural life.
Calm virtue was his choice, his fame;
He knew ambition but by name.
A Son to crown his years was giv'n,
The dearest gift that comes from Heav'n.
Ye Gods! what transport fill'd the Sire!
Loud roll'd the bells—soft trill'd the lyre;
Incessant joys proclaim'd the birth;
The low-thatch'd village rung with mirth;
Time flew away, with rapid wing,
Till Tommy bloom'd his seventh spring.
Oh! then what joy!—what bliss, to find
The bent, the genius of his mind;
Wisdom confess'd her child with joy,
And mark'd, with partial hand, the Boy.
If e'er he err'd for want of thought,
Papa an application taught:

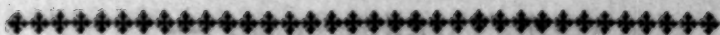
So

So prun'd, while young, this tender spray,
To blossom on some future day.

One morn in spring, to take the air,
Hand link'd in hand, walk'd forth this pair:
The Boy with prattling tales express'd
The dictates of his youthful breast;
The Sire with bliss attends the Child,
And at each winning action smil'd.
Thus thro' the garden's walks they stray'd,
And Nature's blooming charms survey'd.

A BUTTERFLY, exceeding gay,
The product of the month of May,
Quite heedless seeks the painted flow'rs,
T' enjoy the morning's fragrant hours.
A Rose attracts his wanton eye,
Wafting its odours to the sky,
Her foliage sweets invites his stay,
Her charms would please the live-long day:
But Tom beheld the gaudy FLY,
With inward joy—with sparkling eye;
He left Papa with eager pace,
Now here—now there pursues the chase.
Now from the myrtle springs his prey;
From ev'ry herb—from ev'ry spray;
Now sure to gain the mottled prize,
With hat in hand he furious flies,

The fickle FLY his art defies :
The tears now start in Tommy's eyes :
His little cheeks were mark'd with shame,
Till in a tulip's cup his game
Was snugly lodg'd—now inward fir'd,
He press'd the flower, the prey expir'd.
Alas ! how shock'd, deceiv'd he stands !
He stamps the ground, he wrings his hands ;
His tender bosom throb'd with grief :
The Sire was near, he brought relief.
The scene he had beheld with joy,
And now address'd th' attentive BOY :—
‘ Thus, whilst thou tread'st life's giddy space,
‘ Pleasure will court thee to the chase,
‘ With glowing charms she'll meet thine eye :
‘ Her emblem is—a BUTTERFLY.
‘ In the pursuit some joys are found :
‘ But ah ! her darts too surely wound.
‘ If thy too eager passions, blind,
‘ Rush on impetuous as the wind,
‘ In thy embrace she'll quickly cloy,
‘ And then adieu each tranquil joy.
‘ Mark then ! an eager grasp avoid,
‘ Or Pleasure's charms will be destroy'd.



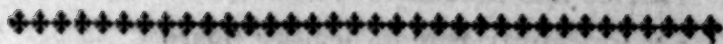
FABLE XXX.

The ANGLER and the PHILOSOPHER.

BESIDE a gentle murmuring brook
An ANGLER took his patient stand;
He ey'd the stream with anxious look,
And wav'd his rod with cautious hand.
The bait with nicest art was drest,
The Fishes left their safe retreat,
And one, more eager than the rest,
Look'd, long'd, and swallow'd the deceit.
Too late she felt the poignant smart,
Her pitying friends her fate deplore,
The ANGLER, with well-practis'd art,
Play'd, hook'd, and drew her to the shore.
Lur'd by the beauty of the day,
The sun now sinking in the sky,
A SAGE pursu'd his walk that way,
And saw the bleeding victim lie.
Far in the vale of years declin'd,
He watch'd the course of Nature's law,

And thus, with philosophic mind,
He moraliz'd on what he saw :—

- ‘ Indulge, awhile, the pensive vein,
‘ And fix this image in your mind ;
- ‘ You’ve hook’d a fish ; observe its pain,
‘ And view the state of human-kind.
- ‘ Fate gives us line, we shift the scene,
‘ And jocund traverse to and fro ;
- ‘ Pain, sickness, still will intervene ;
‘ We feel the hook where’er we go.
- ‘ If, proudly, we our schemes extend,
‘ And look beyond the present hour,
- ‘ We find our straiten’d prospects end,
‘ And own an over-ruling Pow’r.
- ‘ Awhile we sport, awhile lament,
‘ Fate checks the line, and we are gone,
- ‘ Dragg’d from our wonted element
‘ To distant climes, untry’d, unknown.’



FABLE XXXI.

The RICH MAN and the HERMIT.

WITHIN his cell a HERMIT sat,
Unvex'd with cares or idle chat,
And pass'd his time 'twixt books and prayer,
When lo ! with supercilious air,
A voice, without, admittance sought,
Which from his seat the HERMIT brought.
He view'd the man : his air and vest
Bespoke the grandeur of the guest.
Not charm'd with greatness, nor afraid,
No flatt'ring compliments were paid ;
But, like a christian and a man,
He welcom'd him, and thus began :—
' Stranger, your character and name
' I ask not, nor from whence you came :
' Enough for me, it is your fate
' To find my hospitable gate ;
' And he who on this spot is lost,
' Finds no inhospitable host.
' Is it refreshment that you seek ?
' Or counsel from the sage and meek ?

' Advice

‘ Advice and succour I’ll afford,
 ‘ Or spread my frugal, healthy board !’

The Stranger heard like one who could
 Despise his counsel or his food :

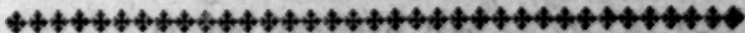
‘ Believe me, friend, I came not hither
 ‘ For this, nor that ; I want not either
 ‘ To eat your food, or be advis’d,
 ‘ Nor talk’d to gravely, or chaffis’d :
 ‘ ’Twas curiosity alone
 ‘ That brought me here, for, of my own
 ‘ I’ve every thing that wealth can give ;
 ‘ In power and affluence I live.’

The HERMIT smil’d to see his pride :

‘ And yet I’m richer still,’ he cried.
 The Stranger, with a sneering leer,
 Looks round, and cries, ‘ Why live you here ?
 ‘ Where are your servants, stewards, pages,
 ‘ Your horses, and your equipages ?
 ‘ Has Rembrandt’s hand adorn’d your hall ?
 ‘ Does Rubens, Titian, grace your wall ?
 ‘ Or is it with rich tapestry wrought,
 ‘ That shews how great Ulysses fought ?
 ‘ Did hands which work’d the Grecian story,
 ‘ Make known your riches, and their glory ?
 ‘ Are you at Bath or Tunbridge seen ?
 ‘ Those charming places ! for the spleen.

‘ Or

' Or say, do hospitals and actors,
 ' Count you amongst their benefactors ?'
 The HERMIT thus :—' I grant, 'tis true,
 ' My alms are not for public view ;
 ' Tho', yet, I never let the poor
 ' Go cold or hungry from my door.
 ' Tunbridge and Bath have I not seen ;
 ' But then I never knew the spleen.
 ' As to the story of the Greek
 ' In tapestry wrought, of which you speak,
 ' I need not that my walls relate
 ' Th' unhappy suff'ring Trojan's fate ;
 ' I see the picture in my mind,
 ' Which you have on the walls defin'd.
 ' Rich without grandeur ; not like you ;
 ' I'm rich because my wants are few.'



The DOVE *and the* ANT.

IS there an eye that never flows
From sympathy of others' woes ?
Is there an ear that still doth fail
To tingle at a mournful tale ?

When

When scenes of fore distress are nigh,
Hard is the heart that checks a sigh,

If with neglect, or with disdain,
We look on misery, grief, or pain ;
Or can suppress the rising groan,
For every suffering not our own ;
In human shapes such souls that dwell
A Hedge-hog's form would suit as well.

By sympathizing with distress,
We shall not find our comforts less ;
For, with the anguish, 'twill impart
A pleasure to the feeling heart.
How sweet the joys, the peace, and rest,
That reign in every tender breast !
The meanest, in distress, the wise
Will freely serve, and not despise.

A lab'ring ANT, who half a league
Had dragg'd his load, with vast fatigue,
As trailing from a distant barn
A huge prodigious grain of corn,
Tottering, beneath the burthen bent,
Dissolv'd in sweat, his strength quite spent ;
As many a weary step he took,
Along the margin of a brook,
He homeward trudg'd thro' thick and thin,
But miss'd a step, and tumbled in.

The

The dashing waves around him fly,
And foam and thunder to the sky.
So have I seen the planks that bear
Britannia's eager sons to war,
Rush from the stocks with fury down,
To distant view a falling town,
Lash the hoarse waves, and stem the tide,
And o'er the billows proudly ride.
He toil'd, and, with unequal strife,
Panted, and struggled hard for life :
The waves come booming o'er his head,
His pow'rs are gone, his hopes are fled ;
He flounces, plunges, strives in vain :
He sinks, then, rising, floats again ;
Resists the stream, and holds his breath,
Despairs of help, and waits for death.

When lo ! a DOVE, with pity mov'd,
For every living thing she lov'd,
Beheld, with deep concern oppress'd,
The honest rustic thus distress'd :
Just where she saw him gasping lie,
She pluck'd a twig, and dropp'd it nigh.
He mounts, like sailor on an oar,
Securely perch'd, and reach'd the shore ;
Then shook his limbs, and rais'd his head,
And thus to his deliverer said :—

‘ To

- ‘ To one unask’d, who could bestow
- ‘ Such service, more than thanks I owe :
- ‘ Receive, devoid of skill and art,
- ‘ Th’ effusion of a grateful heart :
- ‘ You may partake of all I hoard,
- ‘ Sure of a welcome at my board.’

The gentle DOVE, with smile, replies,
And meekness beaming from her eyes :

- ‘ The highest joys on earth we find,
- ‘ Spring from a tender feeling mind ;
- ‘ The soft sensations rising there,
- ‘ Repay with interest all our care :
- ‘ Where kindness is to others shown,
- ‘ Imparting bliss, we form our own :
- ‘ Sweet is the infelt joy that flows
- ‘ From kind relief of others’ woes ;
- ‘ The bosom that with pity burns,
- ‘ Blest in itself wants no returns.’

She spoke ; and mounting spread her wings,
And wheels aloft in airy rings,
Seeking the well-known shady grove,
To nurse her young and bless her love.

When Winter’s snows deform’d the year,
And food was scarce, the frost severe,
The grateful ANT, who had with pain
Amass’d a monstrous load of grain ;

And,

And, as the DOVE might want, he thought,
To find his benefactor sought.
Long had he rov'd the forest round,
Before the gentle DOVE he found,
At distance seen, too far to hear
His voice ; a sportsman, much too near,
With lifted tube, and levelling eye,
The fatal lead prepar'd to fly ;
The trigger just began to move,
His aim was pointed at the DOVE.

With horror struck, the ANT beheld ;
By gratitude and love impell'd,
He mounts, and to his ancle clings,
With all his force the fowler stings ;
That moment was his piece discharg'd ;
He starts, miss'd aim ; the DOVE's enlarg'd.

Pleas'd with the thought of service done,
The Man's revenge he tries to shun ;
In haste the flying DOVE pursu'd,
As wand'ring through the leafless wood ;
Till settling on a tree he finds her,
And of their mutual help reminds her.

' We wisely act, my worthy friend,'
Says he, ' when we assistance lend ;
' And, when for that the meanest call,
' The joy resulting is not all ;

In all the pack, one Dog alone,
TRUEMAN, was proof against a bone.
He'd been so manag'd, taught, and beat,
He never dar'd presume to eat,
Without his master thought it fit,
And told him when to take a bit.
As he, and RINGWOOD, chanc'd, one day,
To straggle from the pack away,
They found a HARE; like light she flew,
As swift, the eager Hounds pursue;
The panting prey was just in sight,
Their hopes increas'd, and Puss's fright;
Beneath their jaws she gasp'd for breath,
And none but they were at the death.
RINGWOOD began to eat the game,
Expecting TRUE' would do the same;
But TRUEMAN, who had ne'er transgress'd,
Nor stole a bit, amongst the rest,
Declin'd it, as a thing forbid,
For which she knew she should be chid.
' And well,' says RINGWOOD, ' if you should ?
' I'd let 'em do the worst they could—
' But trust me, friend, they'll never know;
' Then only pick a bone, or so.'
TRUEMAN, who envy'd his repast,
Was tempted just to taste, at last.

G

He'd

He'd taste, for once, but ne'er again,
It went so much against the grain.

Again they went, again they found;
The HARE lay breathless on the ground,
And RINGWOOD us'd the same persuasion;
He cry'd, ' There's surely no occasion,
' When once a rule is broken thro',
' To stand considering what to do;
' You're not your master's honest Hound,
' —In for a penny, in for a pound.'
The argument prevail'd once more,
He eat more lib'ral than before.
They went again and kill'd a HARE,
And TRUEMAN quarrell'd for his share.

FABLE XXXIV.

The LYRE.

A Coxcomb once, in Handel's parlour found
A Grecian LYRE, and tried to make it sound;
O'er the fine stops, his awkward fist he flings,
And rudely presses on th' elastic strings:
Awaken'd Discord shrieks, and scolds, and raves,
Wild as the dissonance of winds and waves,
Loud

Loud as a Wapping mob at midnight bawls,
Harsh as ten chariots rolling round St. Paul's,
And hoarser far than all th' ecstatic race,
Whose drunken orgies stunn'd the wilds of Thrace.

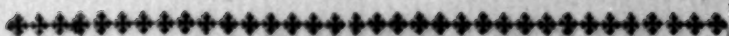
‘ Friend !’ quoth the Sage, ‘ that fine machine
contains

‘ Exacter numbers, and diviner strains,
‘ Strains such as once could build the Theban wall,
‘ And stop the mountain torrent in its fall :
‘ But yet, to wake them, rouse them, and inspire,
‘ Asks a fine finger, and a touch of fire,
‘ A feeling soul, whose all-expressive pow’rs
‘ Can copy Nature as she sinks or soars ;
‘ And, just alike to passion, time, and place,
‘ Refine Correctness into Ease and Grace.’

He said—and, flying o’er each quivering wire,
Spread his light hand, and swept it o’er the LYRE.
Quick to his touch the LYRE began to glow,
The sound to kindle, and the air to flow,
Deep as the murmurs of the falling floods,
Sweet as the warbles of the vocal woods :
The list’ning Passions hear, and sink, and rise,
As the rich harmony or swells, or dies :
The pulse of Avarice forgets to move,
A purer rapture fills the breast of Love ;

Devotion lifts to Heav'n a holier eye,
And bleeding Pity heaves a softer sigh.

LIFE has its ease, amusement, joy, and fire,
Hid in itself, as music in the LYRE;
And, like the LYRE, will all its powers impart,
When touch'd and manag'd by the hand of art;
But half mankind, like Handel's fool, destroy,
Through rage and ignorance, the strain of joy;
Irregularly will their passions roll
Through Nature's finest instrument, the soul:
While men of sense, with Handel's happier skill,
Correct the taste, and harmonise the will,
Teach their affections, like his notes, to flow,
Not rais'd too high, nor ever sunk too low;
Till every virtue, measur'd and refin'd,
As fits the concert of the master-mind,
Melts in its kindred sounds, and pours along,
Th' according music of the moral song,



FABLE XXXV.

The CATERPILLAR and BUTTERFLY.

THE morning blush'd with vivid red,
And night in sullen silence fled;
Green as the leaf on which he lay,
A CATERPILLAR wak'd to day,
And look'd around, and chanc'd to spy
A leaf of more inviting die;
From where he lay, he crawl'd, and found
The verdant spot's indented bound;
Stretch'd from the verge, he strove to gain
The neighbouring leaf, but strove in vain:
In that nice moment, prompt to save,
A brother Worm this warning gave.

‘ O! turn, adventurous as thou art,
‘ Nor hence, deceiv'd by hope, depart;
‘ What tho' the leaf that tempts thee, shows
‘ More tasteful food, more soft repose;
‘ The pass from leaf to leaf forbear;
‘ Behold how high they wave in air!
‘ Thy mangled carcass, writh'd with pain,
‘ Shall mark with blood the dusty plain.

‘ Untimely death ! for now to die,

‘ Is ne’er to rise a BUTTERFLY.’

‘ A BUTTERFLY,’ th’ Adventurer cried,

‘ What’s that ?’—‘ A bird,’ his friend replied.

‘ A bird, the loveliest bird that flies,

‘ To which this reptile form shall rise :

‘ The joyful season Time shall bring,

‘ He bears it on his rapid wing,

‘ An age there is, when all our kind

‘ Disdain the ground, and mount the wind.’

‘ And, should thy friend this age attain,’

(With haste the Worm replied again)

‘ Say what assurance canst thou give,

‘ That I with birds a bird shall live ?

‘ For could I trust thy pleasing tale,

‘ No wanton wish should e’er prevail :

‘ For what, that Worms obtain, can vie

‘ With bliss of birds that wing the sky ?’

‘ Believe my words,’ th’ Adviser said,

‘ Since not of private interest bred.

‘ Not on thy life or death depend

‘ My pleasure or my pain.—Attend !

‘ Like thee, to all the future blind,

‘ I knew not wings for Worms design’d,

‘ Till last yon Sun’s ascending light,

‘ Remov’d the dusky shades of night.

‘ Surpris’d,

‘ Surpris’d, a lovely form I saw,
‘ That touch’d me with delight and awe ;
‘ ’Twas near, and, while my looks betray’d
‘ My wonder, thus the Stranger said :—
“ If view’d by thee with wond’rous eyes,
“ My graceful shape, and varied dies,
“ New wonder still prepare to feel,
“ Amazing truths my words reveal ;
“ For know, like thine my humble birth ;
“ Like thee, I crawl’d a Worm on earth.”—
‘ Ah ! mock me not, said I, nor seek
‘ A worthless triumph o’er the weak ;
‘ Canst thou, thy form with down o’erspread,
‘ By Nature crown’d thy regal head,
‘ Canst thou my reptile shape have worn ?
‘ My reptile shape, of all the scorn !
‘ Hast thou, whose gorgeous wings display
‘ Each varied tint that drinks the day,
‘ More bright than drops of orient dew,
‘ More gay than flowers of gaudiest hue,
‘ With purple edg’d, and fring’d with gold,
‘ Like light, too splendid to behold !
‘ Hast thou, an abject Worm like me,
‘ Crawl’d prone on earth ?—it cannot be !’
“ O cease thy doubts, the Stranger cried,
“ To faith thy happiness allied.

“ Not thrice the morn these eyes have view’d,
“ Since genial Spring my life renew’d ;
“ From death-like slumbers wak’d, I found
“ A guardian shell invest me round ;
“ The circling shield I broke, nor knew
“ How long my safety thence I drew ;
“ But soon perceiv’d, and knew the spot,
“ Where once, a Worm, I fix’d my lot :
“ The *past* with wonder touch’d my breast,
“ More wonder still the *now* imprest,
“ With pleasure mixt—the pleasure grew,
“ At every thought, at every view ;
“ Transform’d, my unknown power I try,
“ I wave my wings, I rise ! I fly !
“ And mount aloft, and sport in air,
“ Transported, when I will, and where !
“ No fear allays the joys I know,
“ The dangers scorn’d that lurk below ;
“ No trampling hoof, my former dread,
“ Can crush me, mangled, to the dead,
“ Ev’n Man himself pursues, in vain,
“ My sportive circuit o’er the plain.”—
“ He said, and, raptur’d with the thought,
“ New charms his brightening plumage caught ;
“ He clapp’d his wings—his rapid flight
“ I trac’d with fond desiring sight.

“ O !

- ‘ O! glorious state—reserv’d to this,
- ‘ I risk not life for reptile blifs :
- ‘ O! catch the glowing wish from me,
- ‘ The same the blifs reserv’d for thee ;
- ‘ Desist from every rash design,
- ‘ And beauty, plumes, and wings are thine.’

He ceas’d, the Adventurer thus replied :—

- ‘ By thee the fancied change be tried ;
- ‘ The *now* is mine, the *now* alone,
- ‘ The *future* Fate’s—a dark unknown !
- ‘ To Nature’s voice my ears incline ;
- ‘ All lovely, loving, all divine !
- ‘ To joy she courts, she points the way,
- ‘ And chides this cold, this dull delay.
- ‘ Farewel ! let Hope thy blifs supply,
- ‘ And count thy gains with Fancy’s eye.
- ‘ Be thine the wings that Time shall send,
- ‘ Believing and obliging friend !’

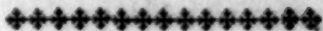
He said, and, sneering fly disdain,
The neighbouring leaf attempts to gain ;
He falls—all bruis’d on earth he lies ;
Too late repents, and groans, and dies.
His friendly monitor, with care,
Avoids each pleasure-baited snare,
False pleasure, false and fatal too !
Superior joys he keeps in view ;

They

They come—the genial Spring supplies
The wings he hop'd, and lo! he flies!
Tastes all that summer-suns prepare,
And all the joys of earth and air,

P A R T II.

P R U D E N T I A L F A B L E S.



F A B L E I.

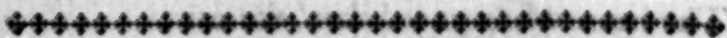
The NIGHTINGALE *and the* OWLS.

A NIGHTINGALE, within a grove,
 A sweet retreat to Wit and Love,
 In singing spent his golden days,
 And poet-like sought only praise.
 The Wits and Beauties flock'd around,
 Charm'd with the minstrel's warbling sound;
 No wealthy swain was insincere,
 The heart was mended thro' the ear:
 His harmony made each one kind,
 A panacea of the mind.
 From envy free, the winged quire
 Their laureat's matchless voice admire;
 Laureat by nature, not by name,
 Tho' ev'ry song from him was fame;
 All but a set of stupid fowls,
 A dozen poetaster OWLS,

That,

That, Owl-like, purpos'd in a shade
To make a charming serenade,
When the next pleasant ev'ning came,
And spread amongst mankind their fame.

The lovers now had fill'd the grove,
And talk of music and of love :
The NIGHTINGALE's melodious sound
Makes all the little echoes round
Return his notes in dying strains,
That thrill'd along the flow'ry plains.
With envy stung, the OWLS begin,
And make a hideous, hooting din.
'What's this?' cries out the am'rous train ;
'Hearing is now become a pain :
'Are birds of night in quest of prey ?'
The OWLS in fury flew away.



FABLE II.

The PUPPET-SHOW.

AT Shipton wake, where, once a year,
With sports and pastime, and good cheer,
The lads and lasses blithe regale,
And feast on cheescakes, tarts, and ale—

Wakes !

Wakes ! the old midwives' constant friend !
 Where Frolic, Love, and Joy attend ;
 Where mad-cap pranks dame Nature shows,
 And maidens their green-sickness lose—
 Roger, to shew his taste polite,
 Mun' visit PUNCH, forsooth, one night :
 Here, undisturb'd by critics' rules,
 And hemm'd by droves of neighbour fools,
 The music, coarse-daub'd scenes, and light,
 Cheaply afford our Hodge delight.
 At PUNCH's smut, which he thought wit,
 His cudden fides were like to split ;
 And at each joke, his lantern jaws,
 Extended wide, roar loud applause ;
 When awkward rude distress appears,
 Roger could scarce refrain from tears.
 The Gothic story, with our Clown,
 As gospel-truth goes glibly down :
 Not Quixote's self was more deceiv'd,
 When Melifandra's fate he griev'd ;
 And of the squeaking pigmy crew
 His vengeful word whole legions slew.

The curtain dropt, the drama ended,
 The motley audience homeward tended,
 Clowns, nurses, children—all well pleas'd,
 And of their long-stor'd farthings eas'd ;

94 PRUDENTIAL FABLES.

While some, more curious than the rest,
 Behind the curtain rudely prest :
 On seeing this, our Roger too,
 To ease his longing, needs must go ;
 With fear and diffidence he enters,
 And scarce to look about him ventures :
 Here, dangling on a pin, was seen
 A purpled King, or tinsell'd Queen :
 Here PUNCH 'mid scepter'd princes tumbled,
 There Priests with Beelzebub lay jumbled :
 Here, sidelong hanging by a wire,
 A chap-fall'n Hero, Prince, or 'Squire.
 With such mock grandeur thus surrounded,
 Poor Hodge, alas ! was quite confounded ;
 Twirling his hat, he scrapes and bows,
 And his extent of breeding shows :
 The rest, at Roger's droll mistake,
 Laugh till their sides and midriff ake.
 ' Sure never yet was seen,' cries one,
 ' Such a besotted simpleton !
 ' Were you not blind, you might behold
 ' 'Tis tinsel, what you take for gold ;
 ' And what ye fancy flesh and blood,
 ' Is nought, d'ye see, but rags and wood,
 ' That cannot speak, look, move, or stand,
 ' But owes all to the Artist's hand,

' Who,

‘ Who, fix’d on high, lordly presides,
‘ And with a wire each action guides.’

Roger, on this, struck with amaze,
Wide gaping like an oaf did gaze ;
While gibes from every side accost him,
And laughing boobies coarsely roast him,
Each judging of his own great wit,
By neighbour Hodge’s want of it.

‘ Nay, hawd ye, hawd ye, where’s the wonder
‘ That I,’ quoth Hodge, ‘ should make this
‘ blunder ?

‘ Since, as a many do report,
‘ In London, nay, some fay at court,
‘ There’s nought more common than to see
‘ The beaver doff’d, and bended knee,
‘ To strutting wooden-headed beaus,
‘ With empty fobs and tinfell’d clothes ;
‘ Who, Puppets like, ne’er speak or move
‘ But as they’re wire-led from above ;
‘ And, like these volk, aside are thrown,
‘ As usefess logs—the work once done.’



FABLE III.

The TORRENT *and the* RIVER.

A Traveller, who on the road
Fled from a gang of thieves behind;
In hopes of reaching some abode,
Spurr'd Sorrel till she went like wind.

Seldom one mischief comes alone!
Scarce had he left them out of sight,
But, rumbling down its bed of stone,
A TORRENT puts him in affright.

‘ Alas! what must a traveller do,
‘ In midst of so much danger got?
‘ Waters oppose, while rogues pursue—
‘ I shall be drown'd or shall be shot.

‘ I hear them coming in full speed,
‘ Venture I must—so in he sprung:
A plunge or two from danger freed,
For Sorrel was both brisk and young.

On came the thieves in full pursuit,
But find the TORRENT in their way;

‘ What

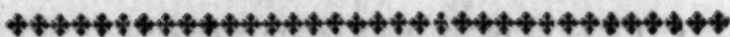
‘ What then ! if yon poor rogue went thro’t
 ‘ To us it ne’er shall prove a stay.’

So said, so done, they plunge, they pass,
 The Traveller’s again beset ;
 A RIVER lies before his face,
 Behind he hears their horses feet.

‘ Courage,’ quoth he—‘ my Mare is good,
 ‘ What need I here of danger dream ?
 ‘ Did I not pass yon foaming flood,
 ‘ And shall I fear this sleepy stream ?’

Fearless at this, he quits the side,
 Tho’ fatal the adventure be ;
 For, swiftly as the waters glide,
 He reach’d the Styx, ere they the sea.

Wit should be learn’d at others’ cost :
 In mind from hence the moral keep ;—
 Disdain those enemies who boast,
 But dread the silent and the deep.



FABLE IV.

The CRITICAL COBLER.

IN matters of a vulgar kind,
 The vulgar are not always blind;
 And fools, if blest with better eyes,
 Discover specks, that 'scape the wise.

In Athens once, of stone or wood,
 (No matter now) a statue stood.
 With nicest hand, with judgment form'd,
 The figure seem'd by Nature warm'd;
 With beauty shap'd in every part,
 It was a master-piece of art:
 Assembled artists gaz'd around,
 And each peculiar beauties found;
 The easy posture, graceful air,
 " You'd think that life itself was there."

In strict proportion nicely wrought,
 The form was judg'd without a fault.

Among the vast admiring crowd,
 A COBLER gave his vote aloud:
 ' Masters,' says he ' by rules of art,
 ' I'll plainly prove a faulty part;

' Close

‘ Close to the shoe pray cast an eye,
‘ You’ll find the quarters much too high.’

Some disbeliev’d, nor would admit

A COBLER cou’d an error hit.

‘ Blockhead ! to think the shoe amiss,

‘ From such a skilful hand as this.’

Howe’er at length their nearer fight

Proclaim’d the COBLER’s judgment right.

Betray’d by praise, with pleasure blind,

New faults the fool aspires to find.

‘ Pray, sir, look here, (I’m never wrong)

‘ You’ll find this arm an inch too long :

‘ The breast too flat, the head awry,

‘ And to the mouth the nose too nigh.’

‘ Friend,’ (says a stranger in his ear)

‘ Your judgment is imperfect here ;

‘ You censure things you cannot know,

‘ And far beyond your knowledge go.’

Let learned lawyers wrongs confute ;

Let soldiers fight, but not dispute ;

Let gentle poets court the muse ;

And COBLERS only judge of shoes.



FABLE V.

The DAW and FEATHERS.

A DAW once blest with health and ease,
 And all that plenty gives to please;
 Amidst his store cou'd never find,
 That sovereign charm, content of mind:
 But restless wou'd for ever roam,
 For bliss he overlook'd at home:
 Ambition had usurp'd his soul,
 And reign'd at large without controul:
 This taught him with disdain to view
 His brethren, honest DAWs, and true:
 Incited him to this and that,
 And made him wish he knew not what.

It chanc'd some Peacocks strutted by,
 In all their spangled pageantry:
 What tumult rose in ev'ry vein!
 What anxious pleasure! pleasing pain!
 He gaz'd, with diff'rent passions fir'd,
 He envy'd, curs'd, but yet admir'd:
 At length, in fond conceit of pride,
 'Why am I not thus fine?' he cry'd.

What

What niggard Nature oft denies,
 Ingenious Art with ease supplies ;
 He mus'd, then sought a neighb'ring place,
 Where relics of the gaudy race
 Discarded lay ; with sparkling eyes,
 In haste he seiz'd the darling prize.
 Instant he culls from forth the rest,
 The plumes that pleas'd his fancy best :
 One here he fixt, another there,
 And scatter'd beauties every where ;
 Then, trailing a huge length of train,
 Stalk'd supercilious o'er the plain.
 As near a neighbouring grange he drew,
 Where fed the party-colour'd crew ;
 The party-colour'd crew, amaz'd,
 On him, and on each other gaz'd ;
 And strove, in admiration lost,
 Who should oblige the stranger most ;
 While one and all came out to shew
 Distinction to such merit due.

But ah ! how transient is the date,
 Of honours purchas'd by deceit !
 Some one, more curious than the rest,
 Descry'd a feather on his breast,
 Which wak'd suspicion's jealous eye,
 And caus'd a stricter scrutiny.

A stricter scrutiny was made,
 And all the latent fraud betray'd.
 With honest indignation fir'd,
 They scorn the wretch so late admir'd;
 And quick, with all their beaky craft,
 Began to rake him fore and aft;
 This seiz'd his neck, and that his breast,
 A third the honours of his crest:
 While others, no less fierce, assail
 The pilfer'd beauties of his tail.
 At length, of all his pride bereft,
 The public scorn he stood, and jest:
 'Alas!' he cry'd, 'this jest, this scorn,
 'By DAWs, as DAWs, is never borne;
 'Reserv'd for those alone on earth,
 'Who PEACOCKS' ape, tho' DAWs by birth.'



FABLE VI.

The LADY and the PIMPLE.

DAPHNE in shape, in face, in air,
 Might with the brightest belle compare;
 But who's exempt from pains and woes?
 Upon her cheek a PIMPLE rose;
 The blemish fill'd her soul with grief,
 From Physic's arts she sought relief:

In

In vain their skill the doctors try'd,
 The PIMPLE all their pow'r defy'd.
 With pining woe she sunk oppress'd,
 And peace forsook her anxious breast.

- ‘Thou hideous cruel scab,’ she said,
 ‘Thus to deform so fair a maid !
 ‘What, couldst thou find no other place
 ‘To shew thyself, but in my face ?
 ‘A face so blooming, smooth, and bright,
 ‘The women’s envy, men’s delight !—
 ‘Alas ! the men will gaze no more ;
 ‘No more they’ll praise, no more adore :
 ‘No more the women’s spleen will rise ;
 ‘No more they’ll view with envious eyes ;
 ‘Men will neglect, and women scorn,
 ‘O shocking ! ’tis not to be borne.—
 ‘Know, hateful thing, I’ll make thee fly,
 ‘Or in the glorious contest die.’

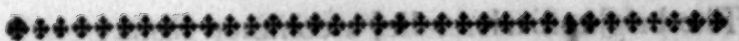
Now quick she calls the surgeon’s aid ;
 The PIMPLE’s gone, the plaister laid ;
 But ah ! no art could heal the wound,
 And rankling humours spread around :
 More wretched now, she loath’d the light,
 She pin’d by day, nor slept by night ;
 Vexation, Physic, Grief, and Pain,
 Soon brought Consumption in their train ;

Who never left her, hapless prey!
Till in the arms of Death she lay.

Thus oft, some trifling ill to shun,
We into fatal mischiefs run;
And to avoid one woe, tho' small,
We into twenty greater fall:
That one, perhaps, some trifling stain,
Or evil merely of the brain,
Which only fancy makes a pain.
Nay, oft the fear of future ills
Our soul with secret terror fills;
Ills which may never be our fate;
Ills which wild fancy may create;
Which to avoid, like fools, we fly,
And plunge in certain misery.

'Tis not the real ills of life,
(Tho' ev'ry state with woes is rife,)
That pierce us with continual pain,
And daily make the world complain:
Our own opinions give the smart,
Imagination wounds the heart.

Happy the breast where Reason reigns!
Its fears are few, and few its pains;
Few ills, few cares, few griefs it knows,
And only smarts for real woes.



FABLE VII.

The DIAMOND.

LONG on Golconda's shore a DIAMOND lay
Neglected, rough, conceal'd in common clay:

By ev'ry passenger despis'd and scorn'd,
The latent jewel thus in secret mourn'd:

- ' Why am I thus to fordid earth confin'd?
- ' Why scorn'd and trod upon by every hind?
- ' Were these bright qualities, this glittering hue,
- ' And dazzling lustre, never meant for view?
- ' Wrapt in eternal shade if I remain,
- ' These shining virtues were bestow'd in vain.'

As thus the long-neglected Gem display'd
Its worth and wrongs, a skilful artist stray'd
By chance that way, and saw, with curious eye,
Tho' much-obscur'd, th' unvalu'd treasure lie:
He ground with care, he polish'd it with art,
And call'd forth all its rays from every part;
And now, young Delia's neck ordain'd to grace,
It adds new charms to Beauty's fairest face.

The mind of man, neglected and untaught,
Is this rough DIAMOND in the mine unwrought.

Till Education lend her art, unknown
 The brightest talents lie, a common stone ;
 By her fair hand when fashion'd, the new mind
 Rises with lustre, polish'd and refin'd.

FABLE VIII.

The GRASSHOPPER and the ANT.

THE fields were cover'd o'er with snow,
 The rivers had forgot to flow ;
 In short, the season, we are told,
 Was dismal, comfortless, and cold.
 A GRASSHOPPER, who once so gay
 Would sing whole summer suns away,
 Sat chill'd within an Oak's old trunk,
 His voice quite gone, his spirits sunk ;
 Without one grain, in this sad weather,
 To keep poor life and soul together.

Forc'd by extremity of want,
 He sought the dwelling of the ANT ;
 Complain'd how hard the times were grown,
 Harder than ever yet were known ;
 Wheat, (bless us !) ne'er was sold so dear !
 O ! 'twas a miserable year !

Howe'er

Howe'er he hop'd the ANT would lend him
 Something; and if she'd thus befriend him,
 Within six months he'd pay it all,
 Both interest and principal,
 'Pon honour: and she well might think
 He wou'd not from his honour shrink.

The ANT heard out his tale, The Matron,
 Of prudence e'en the very pattern,
 Ne'er fond of lending, ask'd the youth
 How he had spent the summer? ' Truth
 ' To say,' quoth he, ' we always pass
 ' That lovely season in the grass;
 ' Both day and night we laugh, we sing,
 ' Till all around the vallies ring !'
 ' You laugh'd and sung both night and day,'
 Return'd the ANT, ' I think you say;
 ' In faith, my friend, your method's pleasant,
 ' You may go dance then for the present.'



FABLE IX.

JOTHAM'S PARABLE.

THE Trees, on politics inclin'd,
 To form a constitution join'd :
 Resolv'd to stand the test of fate,
 They aim at monarchy and state ;
 Produce of their debates, consent
 To institute a government,
 And one of the fraternal race
 Should deign to take the monarch's place.

An universal joy express,
 The Olive-tree was thus address :—
 ' Take thou the sceptre in thy hands,
 ' And we'll submit to thy commands.'
 But he disdain'd the regal pride,
 And to the suppliant tribe reply'd ;
 ' Shall I, who give the nations peace,
 ' And bid the thundering warriors cease ;
 ' Who, when atoning rites are given,
 ' Ascend in curling clouds to heav'n ;
 ' Shall I exchange my fat away,
 ' In lieu of crowns and princely sway ?'

The

The Fig-tree next to reign was prest ;
 Who thus his scornful thoughts exprest :—
 ‘ Shall I renounce my luscious fruit,
 ‘ And yield to your submissive suit ?
 ‘ I’ll rather call my leaves my own,
 ‘ And scorn the honours of a throne.’

Again repuls’d ; with like success
 The Vine receives the third address ;
 Who thus replies, with high disdain,
 ‘ Shall I, to purchase power to reign,
 ‘ Cease at each season to produce
 ‘ Eternal streams of purple juice ?
 ‘ No more with gen’rous wine restore
 ‘ The lab’ring powers that flagg’d before ?
 ‘ No more the monarch’s table grace ;
 ‘ Nor flush with beauty’s charms the face ?’

Still disappointed in their aim,
 The rev’rend council thus exclaim,
 ‘ Perhaps the Bramble, fraught with pride,
 ‘ May gird the sceptre to his side :’
 They spoke, and, cringing to the ground,
 Invok’d the Bramble to be crown’d ;
 ‘ Take the majestic seat,’ they cry,
 ‘ At thy behest we live, or die.’

’Tis done ; and, with ambitious pride
 The stupid Bramble thus reply’d :

‘ If,

' If, the result of your debate,
 ' I sit enthron'd in robes of state ;
 ' Vested with power, I'll spread my sway,
 ' My dictates you must swift obey ;
 ' Beneath my shade your trust repose,
 ' A shelter from impending woes :
 ' But if a traiterous race you prove,
 ' Nor dread my hate, nor wish my love ;
 ' His at my frown, nor court my praise,
 ' Strait I'll emit a vengeful blaze,
 ' At once consume the loftiest bough
 ' On Lebanon's immortal brow.'

FABLE X.

The GOOSE, the SNAKE, and the NIGHTINGALE.

W HEN rul'd by Truth and Nature's ways,
 When just to blame, yet fond to praise,
 As votary of the Delphic God
 I reverence the Critic's rod ;
 But when inflam'd by spite alone,
 I hold all Critics but as one ;
 For tho' they class themselves with art,
 And each man take a different part,

Yet

PRUDENTIAL FABLES. 111

Yet whatfoe'er they find to blame,
Their motives always are the same.

Forth as she waddled in the brake,
A GREY-GOOSE stumbled on a SNAKE,
And took the occasion to abuse her,
And of rank plagiarism accuse her :

' 'Twas I,' quoth she, ' in every vale
' First hiss'd the yelping NIGHTINGALE,
' And boldly cavill'd at each note
' That twitters in the Woodlark's throat—
' Yet you, mean mimic of my manner,
' (Without inlisting in my banner)
' Presume, where'er you take your station,
' To counterfeit my fibilation.'

The SNAKE, enrag'd, replied—' Know, ma-
' dam,

' I date my charter ev'n from Adam,
' Nor shall I (since I bear the bell)
' E'er imitate what I excel.
' Had any other creature dar'd
' Once to aver, what you averr'd,
' I might have been more fierce and fervent,
' But you're a GOOSE—and so your servant.'

' Truce with your folly and your pride,'

The warbling PHILOMELA cried :

' Since no more animals we find
' In nature of the hissing kind,

' You

' You should be friends to one another,
 ' And kind as brother is to brother.
 ' For know, thou pattern of abuse,
 ' Thou SNAKE art but a crawling GOOSE;
 ' And thou, dull dabbler in the lake,
 ' Art nothing but a feather'd SNAKE.'



FABLE XI.

The FOX and ASS.

IN days of yore—in Esop's time,
 When beasts could argue, talk, and rhyme,
 A Fox of more than common sense,
 With judgment, wit, and eloquence,
 Who did his brother beasts excel,
 Wrote poems, (yes, and wrote them well.)
 Wolves, Lions, Dogs, (a numerous tribe)
 Read his proposals, and subscribe—
 They're printed—all the beasts admire
 His lofty diction, thoughts, and fire,
 Except a dull conceited Ass,
 (Who for a critic fain would pass)
 And thus on REYNARD's verse descants:
 ' *This* line is low—*that* meaning wants—
 ' I wonder

- ‘ I wonder why our beasts of merit
- ‘ Praise poems void of sense and spirit ;
- ‘ If they applaud such works as these—
- ‘ I’ll write—sure mine must doubly please.’

The Ass, with spite and envy fir’d,
 To hear the Fox so much admir’d,
 Withdraws to some adjacent stable,
 Gets paper, pen and ink, and table,
 And (as t’ invoke the Nine of use is)
 Brays for assistance from the Muses ;
 Who, with such harsh address affrighted,
 Refus’d their aid, his prayer they slighted.

At this the Ass indignant grown,
 All help disdain’d, and wrote alone.—
 His poem finish’d, he pronounces,
 ‘ I’ve pounds of wit to REYNARD’S ounces,
 ‘ My lines are penn’d (be judge who will)
 ‘ With proper phrases, fire, and skill ;
 ‘ Besides, I’ve satiriz’d the Fox
 ‘ In terms so just—Come in—who knocks ?
 ‘ Sir Goat, your servant,’—‘ Sir, I’m yours’—
 ‘ What news pray stirring without doors ?—
 ‘ None, Sir, at present.’—‘ Take a chair,
 ‘ I’ll tell you some, will make you stare :
 ‘ This poem in my hand you see,
 ‘ Is, Sir, a satire—wrote by me.’

I

‘ That’s

' That's news indeed; for none else know it,
 ' Except yourself, that you're a poet—
 ' I'd have you ne'er pretend to *show* it.' }
 ' Not show it, Sir!—next week I hope
 ' To see't in every pamphlet shop,
 ' And doubt not but each Beast of sense
 ' Will celebrate my eloquence.'

The time is come—the poem printed—
 The learned Beasts his nonsense hinted;
 One cries, 'tis dull—another, base,
 A third condemns it to his face.
 Thus all their vote for REYNARD pass,
 While none but ASSES praise the Ass.



FABLE XII.

The ELM and VINE.

Inscribed to a LADY, who expressed a great aversion to
MARRIAGE.

IN Esop's days, when Trees could speak,
 And talk in Hebrew, Latin, Greek;
 An ELM and VINE, by chance near neighbours,
 Tho' separate, each pursued his labours;
 The VINE, with native sweetness fraught,
 For Man prepar'd the cheering draught;

Her

Her tendrils curl'd along the plain,
 And ruddy clusters swell'd amain.
 The towering ELM could little boast,
 But leaves—a barren shade at most :
 Save when by woodman's sturdy stroke,
 Cut down to make a chair or spoke ;
 Yet tho' but small his claim to merit,
 Not wholly void of sense or spirit :
 His neighbour's worth he view'd with smiles,
 And long'd to share her useful toils.

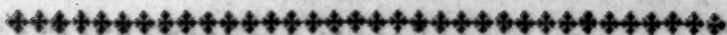
‘ For oh !’ said he, ‘ were we but one,
 ‘ Sure bliss would center here alone ;
 ‘ For I by you encircled high,
 ‘ Should scorn the Oak's proud majesty ;
 ‘ While your rich fruit time might mature,
 ‘ From storms and savage beasts secure ;
 ‘ Our mutual help would soothe our care,
 ‘ And Heav'n approve the happy pair.’

‘ Forbear, Sir ELM,’ the VINE replied,
 ‘ Nor wonder if your suit's denied :
 ‘ Shall I give up my independence,
 ‘ On your caprice to dance attendance ?
 ‘ Must I or nod, or bend, or twine,
 ‘ Just as your Worship shall incline ?
 ‘ Or shall my charms, which all admire,
 ‘ Become a barren tree's attire ?’

' No—seek more suitable alliance—
 ' I to all danger bid defiance.
 ' Here, unconfin'd, I range my fill,
 ' And bounteous Nature waits my will.'

At this the modest ELM, struck mute,
 Forbore to urge his friendly suit;
 But, sorely griev'd to meet disdain,
 A tender sigh express'd his pain.

When lo! thick darkness veils the pole,
 Dread lightnings flash, loud thunders roll;
 Impetuous rains in floods descend,
 And trembling Nature fears an end.
 The VINE, faint, spiritless, forlorn,
 Now seeks the succour late her scorn;
 Creeps feebly to the ELM's embrace,
 And in his arms finds sweet solace;
 United thus they storms defy,
 And mutual grace and aid supply.



FABLE XIII.

The ROSE and BUTTERFLY.

AT day's early dawn a gay BUTTERFLY spied
A budding young ROSE, and he wish'd her his bride;
She blush'd when she heard him his passion declare,
And tenderly told him—he need not despair.

Their faith was soon plighted; as lovers will do,
He swore to be constant, she vow'd to be true.
It had not been prudent to deal with delay,
The bloom of a ROSE passes quickly away,
And the pride of a BUTTERFLY dies in a day. }

When wedded, away the wing'd gentleman hies,
From flow'ret to flow'ret he wantonly flies;
Nor did he revisit his bride till the sun
Had less than one fourth of his journey to run.

The ROSE thus reproach'd him:—' Already so
' cold!
' How feign'd, O you false one, that passion you told!
' 'Tis an age since you left me,' (she meant a few
hours,
But such we'll suppose the fond language of flowers.)

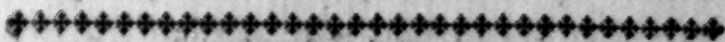
' I saw when you gave the base Vi'let a kiss :
 ' How, how could you stoop to a meanness like this ?
 ' Shall a low little wretch, whom we ROSES despise,
 ' Find favour, O Love ! in a BUTTERFLY'S eyes ?

' On a Tulip, quite tawdry, I saw your fond rape,
 ' Nor yet could the pitiful Primrose escape ;
 ' Dull Daffodils too were with ardour address'd,
 ' And Poppies, ill-scented, you kindly caress'd.'

The Coxcomb was piqu'd, and replied with a sneer,
 ' That you're first to complain, I commend you, my
 ' dear !

' But know, from your conduct my maxims I drew,
 ' And if I'm inconstant, I copy from you.

' I saw the boy Zephyrus rifle your charms,
 ' I saw how you simper'd and smil'd in his arms ;
 ' The Honey-bee kiss'd you, you cannot disown,
 ' You favour'd besides—O dishonour !—a Drone.
 ' Yet worse—'tis a crime that you must not deny,
 ' Your sweets were made common, false ROSE ! to
 ' a Fly.'



FABLE XIV.

The FOX and PHEASANT.

THE Fox one evening took his way
 Thro' the still wood in search of prey,
 And there by chance he casts his eye
 Upon a PHEASANT perch'd on high:
 The luscious morsel made him liek
 His lips, his appetite grew quick;
 And various subtle ways he tries
 To seize upon the wish'd-for prize.
 The timorous PHEASANT kept his stand,
 Spying a Fox so near at hand.
 At length sly REYNARD silence broke,
 And with much seeming kindness spoke:—

' Dear friend, I'm griev'd at heart to find
 ' You're thus to solitude inclin'd;
 ' If you'll descend and take a walk,
 ' I will divert you with my talk;
 ' Did you but know what danger's nigh,
 ' You would not chuse a place so high,
 ' The Falconer is not far behind,
 ' You know his ill-designing mind.'—

' Friend !' (strait the Bird, alarm'd, replied)
 ' We ne'er in friendship were allied ;
 ' If I can ween aright, you're he
 ' To whom I owe my misery :
 ' My fire, by some false friend like you,
 ' Trusting too much to outward shew,
 ' Was cruelly betray'd of late,
 ' A victim to untimely fate :
 ' Your colour, shape, and size declare—
 ' Of you my dam bid me beware.'
 ' Your fire and I were hand and glove,
 ' And well was known our mutual love ;
 ' Your filial grief I cannot blame,
 ' A parent's loss no less can claim ;
 ' Ah ! I was witness to his fate,
 ' It chanc'd as we a sunning fate !
 ' When lo ! a Fox, of griesly make,
 ' Came rushing out of yonder brake,
 ' At unawares your fire he caught,
 ' And fled away as quick as thought.
 ' My faculties with fear subdu'd,
 ' The cruel ravisher I view'd,
 ' Nor could dry-ey'd behold a fight
 ' So full of horror and affright :
 ' He now was got to such a distance,
 ' I could, alas ! lend no assistance.

' But soon I set upon his back,
 ' To be reveng'd, a neighbouring pack,
 ' I own your duty bids obey,
 ' And mind whate'er your dam does say;
 ' But I'm a Fox of gentle kind,
 ' That ne'er to bloodshed was inclin'd:
 ' She caution'd well, but meant not me,
 ' Who with your fire did so agree,
 ' Your fire! whose lineaments I trace
 ' In every feature of your face;
 ' I'm ravish'd with th' enchanting sight,
 ' And can't express the great delight.
 ' What power could form so rare a creature!
 ' How beauteous is each grace and feature!
 ' That bill so black, the blackest jet
 ' That e'er was seen, can't vie with it:
 ' Storace's notes are little worth,
 ' Compar'd with those you warble forth:
 ' The scarlet that surrounds your eyes,
 ' The fam'd Venetian hue outvies:
 ' Might I but stroke that golden breast,
 ' Not all the Gods were half so blest:
 ' The feathers that your tail adorn,
 ' Might by an Indian King be worn.'

The simple Bird, well pleas'd to hear,
 What e'en the wisest can't forbear,
 To his own praises lent an ear.

' This

322 PRUDENTIAL FABLES.

‘ This can’t’ (concludes he) ‘ be a foe,
 ‘ From whom such charming accents flow,’
 Caution and fear now laid aside,
 Thinking no evil could betide,
 He boldly ventur’d on the ground,
 And there too late his error found.
 When you read this, most virtuous, beauteous
 maid !
 Consider how the PHEASANT was betray’d.



FABLE XV,

The SOW and the PEACOCK.

IN days of yore, as authors tell,
 When Beasts and Birds could read and spell,
 (No matter where, in Town or City)
 There liv’d a SWINE exceeding witty,
 And for the beauties of her mind,
 Excelling all her bristled kind;
 But yet, to mortify her pride,
 She found at last her failing side.
 Philosophy she had good store,
 Had ponder’d Seneca all o’er,
 Yet all precautions useless prove,
 Against the power of mighty Love,

It

It happen'd, on a sultry day,
 Upon her favourite couch she lay:
 'Twas a round dunghill soft and warm,
 O'ershadow'd by a neighbouring barn,
 When lo, her winking eyes behold
 A creature with a neck of gold,
 With painted wings and gorgeous train,
 That sparkled like the starry plain!
 His neck and breast all brilliant shine
 Against the sun;—the dazzled SWINE,
 Who never saw the like before,
 Began to wonder and adore;
 But seeing him so fair and nice,
 She left her dunghill in a trice,
 And (fond to please) the grunting elf
 Began to wash and prune herself,
 And from the stinking wave she run,
 To dry her carcase in the sun;
 Then rubb'd her sides against a tree,
 And now, as clean as Hogs can be,
 With cautious air, and doubtful breast,
 The glittering PEACOCK thus address'd:—

' Sir, I, a homely rural Swine,
 ' Can boast of nothing fair nor fine,
 ' No dainties in our troughs appear;
 ' But, as you seem a stranger here,

' Be

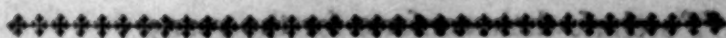
‘ Be pleas’d to walk into my sty,
 ‘ A little hut as plain as I ;
 ‘ Pray venture through the humble door ;
 ‘ And, tho’ your entertainment’s poor,
 ‘ With me you shall be sure to find
 ‘ An open heart and honest mind :
 ‘ And that’s a dainty seldom found,
 ‘ On cedar-floors and city ground.’

Thus far the Sow had preach’d by rule,
 She preach’d, alas ! but to a fool ;
 For this same PEACOCK (you must know)
 Had he been Man, had been a Beau :
 And had (like them) but mighty little
 To say ; so squirted out his spittle ;
 And, with an air that testified,
 He had at least his share of pride,
 He thus began : ‘ Why truly now
 ‘ You’re very civil, Mrs. Sow ;
 ‘ But I am very clean d’ye see,
 ‘ Your sty is not a place for me :
 ‘ Should I go thro’ that narrow door,
 ‘ My feathers might be foil’d or tore ;
 ‘ Or scented with unfavoury fumes ;
 ‘ And what am I without my plumes ?’

The much-offended Sow replies,
 (And turns a-squint her narrow eyes)

‘ Sir,

' Sir, you're incorrigibly vain,
 ' To value thus a shining train ;
 ' For when the northern wind shall blow,
 ' And send us hail, and fleet, and snow,
 ' How will you save from such keen weathers
 ' Your merit ?—Sir, I mean your feathers.
 ' As for myself—to think that I
 ' Should lead an idiot to my sty,
 ' Or strive to make an oaf my friend,
 ' It makes my bristles stand an end :
 ' But for the future, when I see
 ' A Bird that much resembles thee,
 ' I'll ever make it as a rule,
 ' The shining case contains a fool.'



FABLE XVI.

The BUTTERFLY.

A Sprightly Girl, with tender care,
 Was bred in wholesome country air,
 Far from the follies of the town,
 Alike untaught to smile or frown ;
 Her ear unus'd to flattery's praise ;
 Unknown in woman's wicked ways ;

Her

Her tongue from modish tattle free,
 Undipp'd in scandal and Bohea;
 Her genuine form and native grace
 Quite strangers to a looking-glass;
 Nor cards she dealt, nor flirted fan,
 And valued not Quadrille, nor Man;
 But simply liv'd, just as you know
 Miss Chloe did—some weeks ago.

As now the pretty Innocent
 Walk'd forth to taste the early scent,
 She tripp'd about the murmuring stream,
 That oft had lull'd her thoughtless dream.
 The morning sweet, the air serene,
 A thousand flowers adorn'd the scene;
 The birds rejoicing round appear,
 To chuse their consorts for the year;
 Her heart was light and full of play,
 And like herself all Nature gay.

On such a day, as Sages sing,
 A BUTTERFLY was on the wing;
 From bank to bank, from bloom to bloom,
 He stretch'd the gold-bespangled plume;
 Now skims along, and now alights,
 As beauty tempts, or smell invites;
 He now the Vi'let's freshness sips,
 Now kiss'd the Rose's scarlet lips:

Becomes

Becomes anon the Daisy's guest,
 Then press'd the Lily's snowy breast;
 Nor long to one vouchsafes a stay,
 But just salutes and flies away.

The Virgin saw, with rapture fir'd;
 She saw, and what she saw desir'd,
 The shining wings, and starry eyes—
 She burns to seize the living prize:
 Her beating breast, and glowing face,
 Betray her native love of dress,
 And all the Woman full express,
 First flutters in her little breast:
 Ensnar'd by empty outward show,
 She swift pursues the insect Beau;
 O'er gay parterres she runs in haste,
 Nor heeds the garden's flow'ry waste.

Long as the sun, with genial power,
 Increasing, warm'd the sultry hour,
 The Nymph o'er every border flew,
 And kept the shining game in view:
 But when, soft breathing thro' the trees,
 With coolness came the evening breeze,
 As hovering o'er the Tulip's pride
 He hung with wing diversified,
 Caught in the hollow of her hand,
 She held the captive at command.

Fluttering

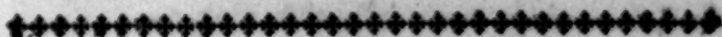
Fluttering in vain to be releas'd,
 He thus the gentle Maid address'd :—
 ' Loose, generous Virgin, loose my chain ;
 ' From me what glory canst thou gain ?
 ' A vain, unquiet, glittering thing,
 ' My only boast a gorgeous wing ;
 ' From flower to flower I idly stray,
 ' The trifler of a summer's day :
 ' Then let me not in vain implore,
 ' But leave me free again to soar.'

His words the little charmer mov'd,
 She the poor trembler's suit approv'd ;
 His gaudy wings he then extends,
 And flutters on her fingers' ends :
 From thence he spoke, as you shall hear,
 In strains well worth a Maiden's ear.

' When now the young and tender age
 ' Is pure, and heedless to engage ;
 ' When in thy free and open mien
 ' No self-important air is seen ;
 ' Unknowing all, to all unknown,
 ' Thou liv'st or prais'd or blam'd by none.
 ' But when unfolding by degrees
 ' The Woman's fond desire to please,
 ' Studious to heave the artful sigh,
 ' Attentive to the tongue and eye,

' Thou

- ‘ Thou sett’st thy little charms to show,
- ‘ And sport’st familiar with the beau,
- ‘ Forfaking then the simple plain
- ‘ To mingle with the courtly train,
- ‘ Thou in the midnight ball shalt see
- ‘ Creatures apparell’d just like me ;
- ‘ Who round and round, without design,
- ‘ Tinsell’d in empty lustre shine :
- ‘ As dancing thro’ the spacious dome,
- ‘ From fair to fair the triflers roam,
- ‘ If, victim of a gay outside,
- ‘ Attracted by th’ embroider’d pride,
- ‘ The glittering gew-gaw thou shouldst chase,
- ‘ As me just now, from place to place,
- ‘ What mighty prize will crown thy pains ?
- ‘ A BUTTERFLY is all thy gains.’



FABLE XVII.

The BUTTERFLY and BEE.

A Gaudy BUTTERFLY, we’re told,
 Once perch’d upon a Marygold ;
 Vainly conceited with his travels,
 Which, boasting, he thus unravels :—

K

‘ I’ve

' I've rang'd the grove's impervious shade,
 ' The spacious lawn, and verdant glade;
 ' O'er flowery hills I wing'd the gale,
 ' And wanton'd thro' the dewy vale;
 ' The garden sought thro' each recess,
 ' The terras, grot, and wilderness;
 ' The lake I pass'd, and boarded there
 ' The gilded yacht so rich and fair;
 ' Of various flowers I mark'd the dies,
 ' And caught the fragrance each supplies;
 ' Around the mansion proud I flew,
 ' No bounds, but Nature's bounds, I knew;
 ' What dignity does travel give!
 ' To live at home, is not to live.'

A BEE that heard the vain parade,
 Beneath a blossom's fragrant shade,
 With just concern beheld the FLY,
 And, frowning, made him this reply:—

' Vain, idle rambler! doom'd to shame!
 ' From travel what hast thou to claim?
 ' To vagrant painted fools, like thee,
 ' 'Tis only new disgrace to see:
 ' From various scenes you ne'er deduce,
 ' With honest aim, a single use:
 ' Once more a short excursion roam;
 ' Go see my hive, and think of home;

' The

‘ The fruits of travel there you’ll find ;
‘ Let then example mend thy mind.’



FABLE XVIII.

The PROPHEPIC BEE.

FLORELLA, under Mamma's care,
Breath'd the pure wholesome country air,
And smil'd and blush'd, to think so near
The virgin's wish—a fifteenth year :
Her prudent parents often read
One sober lecture to her *head* :
' How pleas'd they were she had not known
' The follies of a wicked town !
' That all their thoughts had been confin'd
' To store with what was good her mind ;
' Hop'd she would never do, or know,
' What Lucy did some months ago ;
' And wish'd, in the decline of life,
' To see her make a frugal wife.'

But while her tutors thus impart,
Their precepts never reach'd the heart :
For beaux, and belles, and fages tell
Her heart on other things would dwell ;

On balls and plays, and love and fashion;
 More suited to her ruling passion.
 Florella prudently had weigh'd
 Her taste, with what her mother said;
 She heard the bounds of law and duty,
 Yet studied more the power of beauty;
 Once in a week read holy writ,
 But slept each night with Congreve's wit
 In short, Florella thought her age
 Not grave enough to act the sage;
 And therefore eagerly pursued
 What Nature, Whim, and Folly shew'd.
 She learnt betimes to furl the fan,
 To laugh and ogle with her man;
 Her dress, her air, with studious art,
 Were taught her wishes to impart;
 She tried by action, word, and feature,
 To be a lovely flirting creature.

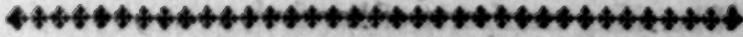
In that soft month, when virgins, fir'd
 With Fashion's charms, are new attir'd;
 When cautious prudes in whispers tell
 The ills that luckless prudes beset;
 The gay Florella left her room,
 To view the flowers' opening bloom:
 Along the garden saunt'ring stray'd
 The self-admiring thoughtless Maid;

When

When meeting Flora in the way,
 Join'd, arm in arm, with chearful May;
 She glanc'd contempt, nor here could rest,
 But pluck'd the posy from her breast;
 And many a bloom and many a flower
 From off their native stems she tore—
 The wanton smil'd—she gaz'd—she frown'd—
 Then threw her garland on the ground.
 Her smiles, her frowns, her looks intent,
 Spoke, plain as language, what she meant:
 With voice distinct they seem'd to say,
 ' Go, short-liv'd pageants of a day!
 ' Go, seek some other nymph to grace;
 ' Your charms, more blooming than her face,
 ' No sweets that scent the various wreath
 ' Can equal sure Florella's breath!
 ' No blushing Rose, no Lily fair,
 ' Can with Florella's face compare!'

Just then a BEE (to talk like Gay)
 In search of sweets was on his way;
 Clung to an Hyacinth, from whence
 Observant, as a BEE of sense,
 He gaz'd around, survey'd the Fair,
 Her beauteous form, her giddy air,
 And, while with pity glow'd his breast,
 Thus he his sentiments express'd:—

' Unthinking maid ! an emblem see
 ' Of what your future fate may be !
 ' That beauty, when familiar grown,
 ' Will cease to wound ;—each fop may own,
 ' May feel its power too, but yet
 ' What skin can fix a male coquet ?
 ' Beaus will behold you as a flower,
 ' A pretty plaything for an hour ;
 ' And he whose bosom Virtue warms,
 ' Thinks red and white are feeble charms ;
 ' But what if (once your pride subdued)
 ' The trifling coxcomb dare be rude ?
 ' What if his vanity you bless,
 ' And the whole woman yields to dress ?
 ' Your charms, alas ! will then be found
 ' As garlands withering on the ground ;
 ' Your beauty, as a faded flower,
 ' Long sever'd from its native bower,
 ' No more will blush upon your cheek,
 ' But, drooping, your dishonour speak ;
 ' Shunning and shunn'd by every eye,
 ' Contemn'd you'll live, unhonour'd die.'



FABLE XIX.

A PAINTER, a POET, and his FRIEND.

A POET of no common vein
Employ'd in Chloe's praise his pen;
With rival art, a PAINTER strove
To pre-engage the Fair to love.
By equal turns, each anxious breast
Now hopes reviv'd, now fears oppress.

The PAINTER, with a warm design,
First drew her picture, all divine;
He snatch'd a charm from ev'ry Fair,
Cleora's port, Belinda's air;
Here Liddy's melting smile we spy,
Here the soft languish of her eye;
A thousand other charms he stole,
Which, join'd in one, complete the whole:
For well he knew a thing so vain
Would spurn the truth with proud disdain.
He flies, and, bending to the ground,
The piece presents with bow profound.

She takes it with a gracious smile,
Herself admiring and his skill;

But then, unable to controul
 The rising transports of her soul,
 Quick she retires; and, when alone,
 Thus to herself the Fair begun:—

‘ One mirror must belie this face;
 ‘ My glass speaks no superior grace:
 ‘ But grant the youth hath made me shine,
 ‘ In ornaments not strictly mine;
 ‘ Yet this, at least, must be confess’d,
 ‘ ’Tis Chloe’s picture in his breast.’

The BARD, all compliments aside,
 Strict truth and reason for his guide,
 Attempts the next to sound her praise,
 With modest, yet with nervous lays,
 No Goddess here the Fair is seen,
 Nay scarce (save to himself) a Queen:
 No wild hyperboles are sought
 (Those far-strain’d tortures of a thought)
 No foreign charms, no borrow’d grace;
 He paints her such as Chloe was.

She views, she reads, and, stung with rage,
 To flames condemns the guilty page.

He saw, and pin’d with silent grief,
 When thus a Friend propos’d relief:

‘ Excuse my freedom, while I show
 ‘ To what your late repulse you owe;

‘ ’Tis

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Uprose the Tully of the place,
 And stroakt his whiskers back with grace.
 Mixt murmurs thro' th' assembly ran,
 When thus the long-tail'd peer began :—
 ' With grief it is, my lords, each day,
 ' I see our commonwealth decay;
 ' These almost hourly depredations,
 ' Must put a RAT beyond all patience.
 ' When we go forth, not one in ten
 ' Of all our host comes back again.
 ' Methinks, too, some peculiar fate
 ' Attends our officers of state.
 ' Our *Speaker* he went long before ;
 ' Our *Chancellor* is now no more :
 ' Nay, e'en our *Monarch's* self, we know,
 ' (*God save the King !*) has felt our foe.
 ' I've found a cure for this dread evil,
 ' This Cat, or rather, Sirs, this Devil :
 ' I humbly would propose to send
 ' Some valiant RAT, in guise of friend ;
 ' This RAT (d'ye mind me ?) having got
 ' Fit time to execute the plot,
 ' Should tie a bell (observe me !) round
 ' His neck, then fly for't underground.
 ' This done, we still in time may hear him :
 ' This done, what creature needs to fear him ?'

A grey

A grey old Senator sat by,
And made the Patriot this reply:—
‘ Your scheme is good ; I like it well ;
‘ We shall, as you say, hear the bell :
‘ We shall—yet—now I *think*, I doubt it ;
‘ For where’s the RAT will set about it ?’



FABLE XXI.

The LION and the ELEPHANT.

Addressed to a LADY who praises every body.

TOO fond of fame, too prone to praise,
Maria, listen to my lays ;
Instruction forms the moral tale,
And lurks beneath the simple veil.

It happen’d once, that, o’er the plain,
A LION held his gentle reign ;
Full smoothly pass’d his peaceful days,
For all his pleasure was to praise :
His courtiers, whether low or high,
The Monarch view’d with equal eye ;
Honest or wicked, great or small,
Their smiling Sovereign prais’d them all ;

And

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And every monster of the wood
Was wond'rous wise and wond'rous good,
As once he stray'd the forest round,
It chanc'd an ELEPHANT he found,
A solitary Sage was he,
Vers'd in thy lore, Philosophy;
Though rude and sightless to the view,
Much had he seen, and much he knew;
But tir'd with Folly's idle sports,
The farce of State, the noise of Courts,
Wisely he gave his evening's close
To peace, to learning, and repose.

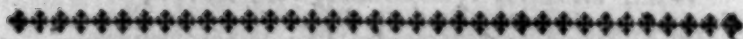
Such Wisdom in so rude a place,
And talents form'd a court to grace,
To find in woods and wilds retir'd,
Th' enraptur'd Monarch much admir'd;
And many a praiseful promise made,
To lure them from retirement's shade,
And fain to courts, life's ampler stage,
Would draw the solitary Sage.

' Ne'er be it said,' with honest pride,
The sage Philosopher replied,
' That I forsook my peaceful cell,
' With you and in your court to dwell,
' And, fed with idle flattery there,
' Your nods, your smiles, and praises share,

' With

‘ With villains, sycophants, and slaves;
‘ With apes and monkeys, fools and knaves.’

Fair Maid, ’twere needless to explain,
To sense like your’s, the fabling strain;
Then greet no more, to forms a slave;
Fair Virtue as you greet a Knave;
Not that I wish you, madly bold,
To sally forth, like knights of old,
And fierce and open war to wage
With all the vices of our age;
Nor would, to Virtue’s cause untrue,
Forbid to praise where praise is due;
But oh! I charge you, praise not them,
Whom conscience teaches to condemn.
Be cautious, then; for, Lady, know
Offended Virtue holds her foe,
Both him that takes, and him that pays
The words of prostituted praise.



FABLE XXII.

The GOOSE and the SWANS.

I Hate the face, however fair,
 That carries an affected air;
 The lisping tone, the shape constrain'd,
 The studied look, the passion feign'd,
 Are fopperies, which only tend
 To injure what they strive to mend.
 With what superior grace enchants
 The face which Nature's pencil paints!
 Where eyes, unexercis'd in art,
 Glow with the meaning of the heart!
 Where freedom and good-humour sit,
 And easy gaiety and wit!
 Tho' perfect beauty be not there,
 The master lines, the finish'd air,
 We catch, from ev'ry look, delight,
 And grow enamour'd at the sight;
 For Beauty, tho' we all approve,
 Excites our wonder more than Love;
 While the Agreeable strikes sure,
 And gives the wounds we cannot cure.

Why

Why then, my Amoret, this care,
 That makes you, in effect, less fair?
 If Nature on your cheek bestows
 A bloom that emulates the Rose;
 Or, from some heav'nly image, drew,
 A form Apelles never knew;
 Your ill-judg'd aid will you impart,
 And spoil by meretricious Art?
 Or had you, Nature's error, come
 Abortive from the mother's womb,
 Your forming care she still rejects,
 Which only heightens her defects.
 When such, of glitt'ring jewels proud,
 Still press the foremost in the crowd,
 The gaudy dress attracts the eye,
 And magnifies deformity.

A Goose, affected, empty, vain,
 The shrillest of the cackling train,
 With proud and elevated crest,
 Precedence claim'd above the rest.
 Says she, 'I laugh at human race,
 ' Who say Geese hobble in their pace;
 ' Look here! — the slanderous lie detect;
 ' Not haughty Man is so erect.
 ' That Peacock yonder! Lord, how vain
 ' The creature's of his gaudy train!

• If

- ' If both were stripp'd, I'd pawn my word,
- ' A Goose would be the finer bird :
- ' Nature, to hide her own defects,
- ' Her bungled work with fin'ry decks :
- ' Were Geese set off with half that show,
- ' Would men admire the Peacock?—No.'

Thus vaunting, thro' the mead she stalks,
 The cackling breed attend her walks ;
 The sun shot down his noon-tide beams,
 The Swans were sporting in the streams ;
 Their snowy plumes, and stately pride,
 Provok'd her spleen : ' Why there,' she cry'd,
 ' Again, what arrogance we see,
 ' Those creatures, how they mimic me !
 ' Shall every fowl the water skim,
 ' Because we Geese are known to swim ?
 ' Humility they soon shall learn,
 ' And their own emptiness discern.'

So saying, with extended wings,
 Lightly upon the wave she springs ;
 Her bosom swells, she spreads her plumes,
 And the Swan's stately crest assumes :
 Contempt and mockery ensu'd,
 And bursts of laughter shook the flood.

A SWAN, superior to the rest,
 Sprung forth, and thus the fool address'd :—

' Conceited

' Conceited thing, elate with pride !
 ' Thy affectation all deride ;
 ' These airs thy awkwardness impart,
 ' And shew thee plainly as thou art.
 ' Among thy equals of the flock,
 ' Thou hast escap'd the public mock,
 ' And, as thy parts to good conduce,
 ' Been deem'd an honest hobbling Goose.'

Learn hence to study wisdom's rules :
 Know foppery's the pride of fools :
 And, striving Nature to conceal,
 You only her defects reveal.



FABLE XXIII.

The TRAVELLER and the GRASS-HOPPERS.

A TRAVELLER, in a summer's day,
 What with the heat and dust together,
 Was grown quite peevish ; 'tis the way
 Of many folks in sultry weather.
 Our TRAVELLER, Sir, was one of these ;
 They're but a foolish kind of men ;
 He pish'd, and puff'd, and wip'd his face,
 Then shut his eyes and would have slept ;

L

But

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But all around, amongst the grafs,
The Grafs-hoppers a twittering kept,
And seem'd to say ' That's if we please ;'
For Flies are faucy now and then.

When once a man's a little four,
A trifling matter makes him mad ;
You've seen a baby beat the floor ?
Our TRAVELLER then was full as bad :
He bluster'd ; 'twould have made one laugh :
The Insects put him in a flame.
So down he jump'd, and drew his sword,
And flash'd and cut, as who should say,
I'll trim you, scoundrels.—' Pooh ! absurd !
' Why did not he pursue his way ?
' He'd acted wiser by the half.'
That's true ; but still you do the same.

' Who I ? excuse me.'—Nay 'tis true ;
I heard you making such a pother,
Crying, What would you have me do ?
The world says this, and that, and t'other.
I'll tell you what I'd have you do.
You'll say they're troublesome ; what then ?
Let them alone, and go you on,
And never heed their senseless riot ;

To silence all you'll ne'er have done,
 Forget them, and they'll soon be quiet.—
 Believe me, you will find it true,
 'Tis just the same with Flies or Men.



FABLE XXIV.

The WOLF and the GOOSE.

ONCE on a time, in ancient days,
 A GOOSE thus cackled her own praise;
 Thus boasting spake the silly fool,
 Plac'd in the middle of a pool:—
 ' Who dares my courage thus arraign,
 ' And dare insult in haughty strain?
 ' Henceforward know, that 'mongst the bold
 ' A great superior rank I hold.
 ' When Gallic foes forsook their home,
 ' T' invade the warlike sons of Rome,
 ' Bold with success, at midnight hour,
 ' They climb'd the heights of Jove's great
 ' * tow'r,
 ' When all the guards were lock'd in sleep,
 ' And left expos'd the craggy steep:
 * The Capitol, situated on the summit of a hill.

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‘ My valiant fires then rais’d alarms,
 ‘ And rous’d the Romans to their arms;
 ‘ Who forc’d the Gauls to take their flight,
 ‘ And quick descend the mountain’s height.’

Then in his turn a WOLF began:—

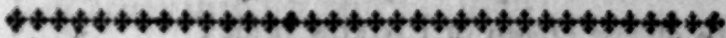
‘ Who shews more kindness, Wolf or Man ?
 ‘ When Rome’s great founder, as they say,
 ‘ An helpless infant moaning lay,
 ‘ Dragg’d from the mother’s fost’ring care,
 ‘ He fill’d with piteous cries the air.
 ‘ A She-Wolf then her care supply’d,
 ‘ And all her fierceness laid aside :
 ‘ The tender babe she fondly strove
 ‘ To foster with the kindest love.’

While thus they talk’d, a furious Kite
 Was thither seen to bend his flight :
 The trembling GOOSE plung’d down the flood,
 Forgetful of her ancient blood.
 Meanwhile a straggling Ewe appears,
 And tow’rds the pool his footstep steers :
 The WOLF no longer seem’d to prove
 His boasted tenderness and love ;
 On the poor Ewe he quickly flies ;
 Beneath his fangs the creature dies.

Ye fools ! who seek to raise your name
 By your forefathers’ noble fame,

Know

Know that unless their steps you trace,
 Their honour'd mem'ry you disgrace :
 Henceforth from your own actions strive
 A glorious title to derive.



FABLE XXV.

The two PIGEONS.

A He and she, of Pigeon race,
 Last Thursday left their former place;
 But whether they'd been us'd to roam,
 Or fought some other surer home;
 Or weary of the crowd were grown,
 And chose to love and bill alone,
 And be at ease, like country elves,
 And care for nothing but themselves;
 It matters not to me or you—
 Howe'er the little wand'ers flew
 Into a parlour, quite unseen,
 And settled on an Indian screen.

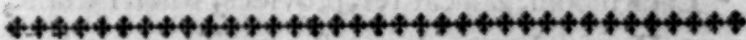
Two female friends, an hour before,
 'How old?'—Twice ten, and somewhat more,
 To taste the sweets of Hampstead air,
 Had left behind them Hyp and Care;

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And prais'd the change of London town,
 For health and spirits, now their own.
 As to the room they tripp'd along,
 To sip their tea, and humm'd a song,
 The feather'd pair they both espied,
 In all the bloom of PIGEON pride ;
 ' Bless me !' says one, ' what sight is this ?
 ' An emblem sure of joy and peace !
 ' We'll not disturb the happy pair—
 ' Why let them coo and fondle there ;
 ' They fled for shelter—and shall find
 ' To strangers we are not unkind.'
 At the request, the younger Fair
 Attends with due and hourly care :
 They flutt'ring eager, grateful stand,
 And take their food from either hand :
 They let her stroke their glossy frame,
 ' No creatures sure were half so tame.'
 She hears them coo and sees them blest,
 And make but one soft downy nest ;
 Their vows are ardent, full of flame,
 Their souls are constant and the same,
 No wishes to defile the bed,
 Where faithful love the couple led.—
 But may not this enamour'd pair
 Affect the gently-tending Fair ?

And

And make her wish to have a swain,
To breathe his vows and tell his pain?
Make her confess she bears a part,
In what can touch his manly heart?
Make her find out, her present state
Less happy than her bird and mate?



FABLE XXVL

The BUTTERFLY and CATERPILLAR.

AS on a gay Rose a young BUTTERFLY sat,
With self, like Narcissus, in love;
His eyes rov'd with joy from this beauty to that,
Uncertain which most to approve.

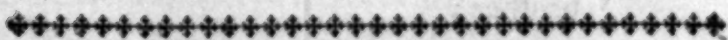
His back was adorned with tissue of gold,
His velvet-vest ting'd like the sky;
Gay em'rals, when either silk wing he'd unfold,
In studs gave delight to the eye.

With silent delight oft he read himself o'er,
As av'rice doth gaze on its pelf:
At length he exclaim'd—' I was blind heretofore,
' Or ere now I had known myself.

- ' If earth I rove o'er, if I travel the air,
 ' A being like self shall I see ?
' Most certainly, all that exists here or there,
 ' In grace, must submit unto me !
' This Rose's gay damask, so soft and so fine,
 ' Was wove to afford me a seat :
' Each bloom, as a cat' rer, provides, when I'd dine,
 ' Honey-dews—the most exquisite treat !
' What powers did generous Nature bestow,
 ' To answer my beauties in all !
' On wings like the wind, where I list I can go,
 ' Not like these mean creatures that crawl !'—
' D'ye hear,' said a CATERPILLAR unto his
 friends,
 Who on a near branch had their stations,
' How cousin himself to himself recommends,
 ' And lessens his nearest relations ?
' By us unrepov'd shall such haughtiness be ?
 ' Say, shall we submit to disgrace,
' From one who was yesterday just such as we ?—
 ' I'll up, and will shew him his race.
' So, cousin'—he now to the BUTTERFLY cries,
 With frankness and freedom of air ;—
 ' Pray,

- ‘ Pray, when didst thou on with this glitt’ring
‘ disguise ?
- ‘ I scarce know you in it, I swear !
- ‘ Thou’rt bent, I presume, on some visit or other,
‘ Thus trick’d out so wond’rous fine :
- ‘ This day, I suppose, thou’rt engag’d to thy
‘ brother ;
- ‘ He ask’d me on cabbage to dine.’—
- ‘ Marry, cousin ! come up !’ Master BUTTERFLY
cries,
- ‘ Most highly we’re honour’d indeed !
- ‘ A crawler ally’d to a person who flies !—
- ‘ Invited on cabbage to feed !
- ‘ Be gone, saucy scoundrel !—still, creatures, like
‘ thee,
- ‘ Are studious to pick up relations,
- ‘ Who make such a noble appearance as me,
‘ And happily fill the best stations !’—
- ‘ And wilt thou not own what thou art ?’ cry’d
the other,
- ‘ Thou poor supercilious Fly !
- ‘ Thy father, thy mother, thy sister, thy brother,
‘ Were crawlers no better than I.
- ‘ Thou

' Thou see'st not thyself; if thou didst, thou
 ' wouldst see
 ' A Worm—a mere Worm in disguise!—
 ' On Fortune's poor smile, all who vaunt it like
 ' thee,
 ' Shall learn by rebuke to be wise.'



FABLE XXVII.

The TURNSPIT, the SPANIEL, and the MASTER.

THE feast was serv'd, and nine and nine
 Were chang'd for sweatmeats, fruit, and wine;
 The Cook, from sultry toils releas'd,
 Selected fragments from the feast;
 And chicken's legs, and scraps of veal,
 Secur'd against another meal.
 The labours of the day were o'er,
 And now the TURNSPIT toil'd no more;
 By Cook releas'd, he sought the shade,
 And on the coolest grass-plat laid;
 Supine he stretch'd, at ease he roll'd,
 Whilst, unawares, the MASTER stroll'd,
 With favourite LOVELY by his side.

' Heighday! what's this?' the MASTER cry'd:
 ' The

‘ The ugliest beast, I vow and swear—
 ‘ Get out—you shan’t lie stretching there ;’
 And LOVELY, with the furious zeal
 Which favourites for their masters feel,
 Attack’d the Dog ; whose fire and spirit
 Were not inferior to his merit.
 The MASTER saw th’ unequal strife,
 Which threaten’d hard the fav’rite’s life ;
 And, like the partial Gods, who shroud
 Their fav’rite heroes in a cloud,
 He interpos’d, and snatch’d away
 LOVELY, who had fall’n the TURNSPIT’s prey :
 Then thus address’d the conqu’ring Cur :
 ‘ Now say whose Dog ?’ — ‘ Your honour’s, Sir,
 ‘ Who kindly with your Cook combines
 ‘ To turn and roast your favoury chines ;
 ‘ For every day I dress the meat,
 ‘ Which you and idle LOVELY eat ;
 ‘ And truly, tho’ I’m mean and rough,
 ‘ Cook knows my merit well enough :
 ‘ And had I been a spaniel bred,
 ‘ With dangling ears, and handsome head,
 ‘ The TURNSPIT, whom you now despise,
 ‘ Had been a fav’rite in your eyes ;
 ‘ Had din’d with you, and been caress’d,
 ‘ While other Dogs the meat had dress’d.

‘ But

‘ But merit, in your narrow mind,
 ‘ To beauty only is assign’d:
 ‘ Tho’ flattery here bears equal part,
 ‘ For fawning LOVELY’s won your heart:
 ‘ But, MASTER, was you truly wise,
 ‘ You’d use your judgment with your eyes.’



FABLE XXVIII.

The ELECTION of the FOX.

ELECTIONS, as they ought to be,
 For years were absolutely free;
 And Members by the wise were thought
 To be as honest as they ought.
 At length, among the brutal tribe,
 A Fox first introduc’d a bribe:
 No vice is long without its brother,
 One bribe soon introduc’d another:
 These set a hundred more a flying;
 For bribes are fam’d for multiplying:
 The poison through the fairest spread,
 And Liberty hung down her head:
 The story of its introduction
 I’ll here unfold for your instruction.

A Monkey,

A Monkey, of a scheming head,
 Was to the barber's calling bred :
 Four trees of filbert-nuts he claim'd,
 And thence a Freeholder was nam'd ;
 Beneath the shelter of these trees,
 He lather'd brutes, and liv'd at ease.
 Beneath one day appear'd a GOAT,
 To lose his beard, and gain a vote.
 The Monkey soon began to shave,
 And talk politically grave.
 The GOAT, a brute of much discerning,
 Applauds his wisdom and his learning ;
 And then insinuates the case :—

- ‘ I'm candidate for such a place ;
- ‘ Accept these dozen peaches, pray,
- ‘ (I'm shav'd extremely well to-day ;)
- ‘ The other Candidate, you know,
- ‘ Is your's, and all the nation's foe :
- ‘ I hope you'll such a rogue oppose,
- ‘ I'll be your friend—if I am chose.’

The Monkey promis'd—bit a peach,
 And only wish'd to lather each.

The other Candidate—a Fox,
 Came with a train of Dunghill Cocks ;
 The Monkey shav'd him neat and trim,
 And whisk'd the hair on every limb ;

The

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The Fox two dozen peaches gave,
 Then swore the GOAT was but a knave:—
 ‘ The GOAT, my wishes to defeat,
 (Cries he) ‘ reports, that Fowls I eat;
 ‘ But let it, friend, be understood,
 ‘ That I abhor the sight of blood;
 ‘ If true, what such as him pretend,
 ‘ Think you they’d on my steps attend?
 ‘ Then, since you know your friends from foes,
 ‘ I beg that you’ll the GOAT oppose.

He promis’d, as he did before,
 But kept his word a little more,
 For twelve is less than twenty-four. }
 He gave the artful Fox his vote—
 And thus was call’d to by the GOAT;
 ‘ Stay, Barber, you’re mistaken, stay,
 ‘ You know you shav’d my beard to-day.’—
 ‘ Why what you say,’ cries Pug, is true,
 ‘ But faith I shav’d the Fox since you.’
 ‘ The peaches, Sir!’—‘ The peaches!—oh!
 ‘ I’ve eat them long enough ago;
 ‘ Those twelve you gave me, Sir, eat well,
 ‘ Nor could his twenty-four excel;
 ‘ In taste I mean—but, Sir, in number,
 ‘ One dozen must to two knock under.

‘ Besides,

' They will one day, tho' I am loth
 ' To prophesy, confine us both;
 ' For those who hear us with such pleasure,
 ' Must like our singing beyond measure.'

The morning came, the hooting bird
 All night the watchful parson heard,
 Who, to secure his next night's rest,
 Resolv'd to seize the shrieking guest;
 And now, pursuant to his words,
 The ladder's fix'd—they take the birds;
 Who, parting from their mansion, sigh'd,
 Whilst one with serious visage cry'd,
 ' How just that prophecy of thine!—
 ' This proves our voices very fine.'



FABLE XXX.

The CUCKOW TRAVELLER.

ONCE, says the Fable, a CUCKOW—
 Lords, Knights, and 'Squires, the tale's for you—
 A CUCKOW once, as Cuckows use,
 Went out upon a winter's cruise:
 Return'd with the returning spring,
 The Birds about him form a ring;
While,

While, puff'd with pride and self-conceit,
 High on an Elm he takes his feat,
 Haranguing thus the num'rous band:—
 ' Old England! well, the land's a land!
 ' But rat me, gentlemen,' says he,
 ' We passage fowl, that cross the sea,
 ' Have vast advantages o'er you,
 ' Whose native woods are all your view.
 ' The season past, I took a jaunt
 ' Among the isles of the Levant,
 ' Where, by the bye, I stuff'd my guts
 ' With almonds and pistachio-nuts.
 ' 'Twas then my chance some weeks to be
 ' In that choice garden Italy:
 ' But, underneath the sky's expanse,
 ' No climate like the south of France!
 ' You've often heard, I dare to swear,
 ' How plenty Ortolans are there;
 ' 'Tis true—and more delicious meat,
 ' Upon my soul, I never eat:
 ' Their Eggs are good; it was ill luck
 ' The day I had not ten to suck;
 ' Yet, notwithstanding, to my goût,
 ' The bird's the sweeter of the two.'

He went on talking pert and loud,
 When an old Raven, from the crowd,

M

Stopt

Stopt short his insolent career :—

- ‘ Why what a monstrous bustle’s here !
- ‘ Say to what purpose is’t you roam,
- ‘ And what improvements bring you home ?
- ‘ Has Italy, on which you doat,
- ‘ Supply’d you with another note ?
- ‘ Or France, which you extol so high,
- ‘ Taught you with better grace to fly ?
- ‘ Then tell us not of where you’ve been,
- ‘ Of what you’ve done, or what you’ve seen ;
- ‘ For you, and all your rambling pack,
- ‘ Cuckows go out, Cuckows come back.’



FABLE XXXI.

The FAVOURITE.

A Country 'Squire, by whim directed,
 The true staunch dogs of chase neglected.
 Beneath his board no Hound was fed ;
 His hand ne'er stroak'd the Spaniel's head.
 A snappish Cur, alone carefs'd,
 By lies had banish'd all the rest.
 YAP had his ear ; and defamation
 Gave him full scope of conversation.

His

His sycophants must be preferr'd ;
 Room must be made for all the herd :
 Wherefore, to bring his schemes about,
 Old faithful servants all must out.

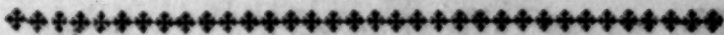
The Cur on every creature flew,
 (As other great men's puppies do)
 Unless due court to him were shown,
 And both their face and business known.
 No honest tongue an audience found ;
 He worried all the tenants round ;
 Because he liv'd in constant fear,
 Lest truth, by chance, should interfere.
 If any stranger dar'd intrude,
 The noisy Cur his heels pursued.
 Now fierce with rage, now struck with dread,
 At once he snarled, bit, and fled.
 Aloof he bays, with bristling hair,
 And thus in secret growls his fear :—
 ' Who knows but Truth, in this disguise,
 ' May frustrate my best-guarded lies ?
 ' Should she, thus mark'd, admittance find,
 ' That very hour my ruin's sign'd.'

Now in his howl's continued sound,
 These words were lost, the voice was drown'd.
 Ever in awe of honest tongues,
 Thus every day he strain'd his lungs.

It happen'd, in ill-omen'd hour,
 That YAP, unmindful of his power,
 Forsook his post, to love inclin'd,
 A favourite bitch was in the wind :
 By her seduc'd in amorous play,
 They frisk'd the joyous hours away.
 Thus, by untimely love pursuing,
 Like Anthony, he fought his ruin.
 For now the 'Squire, unvex'd with noise,
 An honest neighbour's chat enjoys.
 ' Be free,' says he, ' your mind impart ;
 ' I love a friendly open heart :
 ' Methinks my tenants shun my gate.
 ' Why such a stranger grown of late ?
 ' Pray tell me what offence they find ;
 ' 'Tis plain they're not so well inclin'd.'
 ' Turn off your Cur' (the Farmer cries)
 ' Who feeds your ear with daily lies.
 ' His snarling insolence offends ;
 ' 'Tis he that keeps you from your friends.
 ' Were but that saucy puppy check'd,
 ' You'd find again the same respect.
 ' Hear only him, he'll swear it too,
 ' That all our hatred is to you ;
 ' But learn from us your true estate ;
 ' 'Tis that curs'd Cur alone we hate.'

The

The 'Squire heard truth. Now YAP rush'd in;
 The wide hall echoes with the din:
 Yet truth prevail'd; and, with disgrace,
 The Dog was cudgell'd out of place,



FABLE XXXII.

The CATERPILLAR and SNAIL.

IT always arrogance implies,
 To try to prove we're over wise;
 And those who make the greatest boast,
 We always should suspect the most.
 Hid in a Tree, where autumn try'd
 To satisfy the gard'ner's pride,
 Upon a peach (the very best;
 He had kept it for to grace his feast)
 A SNAIL had climb'd to take her place,
 And what she could not eat deface.
 The same attractive smell and hue,
 Had drawn a CATERPILLAR too,
 To taste that peach above the rest:
 For insects always chuse the best:
 And on that principle had try'd
 The highest-favour'd glowing side,

Had not the SNAIL, who had eat to fill her,
Left little for the CATERPILLAR;
Which made a quarrel and embroil,
Like thieves who can't divide the spoil.

The CATERPILLAR knew, in fact,
She was not guilty of the act;
And, tho' the SNAIL thought fit t'abuse her,
She could not actually accuse her;
She had not tasted of the peach,
So, on Forbearance made a speech:—

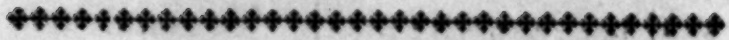
' 'Tis true, you greedy thing, 'tis true,
' I peaches love as well as you,
' And every day could eat my fill,
' If I, like you, indulg'd my will:
' But can I see the gard'ner wait,
' And tend his fruit-trees soon and late;
' And, when the tedious season's past,
' Deprive him of his hopes at last?
' Shall reptiles, after all his care,
' Pillage the fruit bad seasons spare?
' No—some reward his labour asks,
' To compensate such heavy tasks.'

' Had you that noble, generous spirit,'
Reply'd the SNAIL, ' I'd grant your merit:
' But does not every creature know,
' You are the garden's greatest foe?

I

' And

- ‘ And yet the speech you’ve made is such—
- ‘ In short, you have profess’d too much.
- ‘ The gard’ners know, with all their care,
- ‘ That we must have our proper share :
- ‘ Of herbs and leaves, and fruits and flower
- ‘ They let us eat, tho’ not devour.
- ‘ Perhaps, sometimes, we may transgress,
- ‘ Myself I have done it, I confess.
- ‘ But every thing alive is frail,
- ‘ Then why perfection in a SNAIL ?
- ‘ Believe me, those who most profess it,
- ‘ Always in smallest share possess it ;
- ‘ To own they’re wrong sometimes, none scorn,
- ‘ I’m always drawing in my horn ;
- ‘ And as for you, I think (indeed
- ‘ Believe it, as I would my creed)
- ‘ You came, for all that vaunting speech,
- ‘ To feast upon that very peach.’



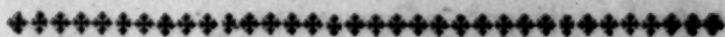
FABLE XXXIII.

The SNAIL, *the* BUTTERFLY, *and* VIRTUOSO.

THE lofty pines with tempest bow,
 When humble shrubs scarce bend below;
 Rebellion shakes the palace-roof,
 Whilst straw-built cottages are proof;
 Thus glittering objects stand to view,
 Court wonder, praise, and danger too,
 Encumber'd with his house, a SNAIL
 Crawl'd o'er the ground: he could not fail
 Remarking, with an envious eye,
 A little powder'd BUTTERFLY,
 Which fann'd with painted wings the air,
 Lighting on flowers, now here, now there.
 But whilst from flower to flower he flew,
 Sipping from each the fragrant dew,
 His charms a VIRTUOSO spies;
 To catch him now with art he tries.
 From leaf to leaf the insect past;
 But still pursu'd, was caught at last.
 On paper now, transfix'd with pins,
 The VIRTUOSO views his wings;

And,

And, as he wav'd him to the sun,
The SNAIL survey'd him, and begun :—
‘ Behold the Insect, fine and gay,
‘ Who sipp’d the fragrant sweets of May,
‘ And, deck’d with spots and colours fine,
‘ Sow’d envy in this heart of mine !—
‘ Reproof how sudden and how just !
‘ Beauty’s a flower that fades in dust ;
‘ I, unadmir’d by curious eye,
‘ Can creep unhurt while beauties die :
‘ I live unknown ; their shorter date
‘ Is made conspicuous by their fate.’



FABLE XXXIV.

The CAMELION.

TWO Travellers, of different cast,
As o'er Arabia's wilds they pass,
And on their way, in friendly chat,
Now talk'd of this, and now of that;
Discours'd awhile, 'mongst other matter,
Of the CAMELION's form and nature,
 ' A stranger animal,' cries one,
 ' Sure never liv'd beneath the sun.
 ' A Lizard's

' A Lizard's body, lean and long,
 ' A Fish's head, a Serpent's tongue;
 ' Its tooth with triple claw disjoin'd;
 ' And what a length of tail behind!
 ' How slow its pace! and then it's hue—
 ' Who ever saw so fine a blue?'

' Hold there,' the other quick replies,
 ' 'Tis green—I saw it with these eyes,
 ' As late with open mouth it lay,
 ' And warm'd it in the sunny ray;
 ' Stretch'd at its ease the beast I view'd,
 ' And saw it eat the air for food.'

' I've seen it, Sir, as well as you,
 ' And must again affirm it blue.
 ' At leisure I the beast survey'd,
 ' Extended in the cooling shade.'

' 'Tis green, 'tis green, Sir, I assure ye.'—
 ' Green!' cries the other, in a fury—
 ' Why Sir—d'ye think I've lost my eyes?'—
 ' 'Twere no great loss,' the friend replies,
 ' For if they always serve you thus,
 ' You'll find them but of little use.'

So high at last the contest rose,
 From words they almost came to blows;
 When luckily came by a third—
 To him the question they referr'd;

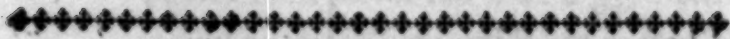
And

And begg'd he'd tell them, if he knew,
 Whether the thing was green or blue.
 ' Sirs (cries the umpire) cease your pother,
 ' The creature's neither one nor t'other.
 ' I caught the animal last night,
 ' And view'd it o'er by candle-light ;
 ' I mark'd it well—'twas black as jet.—
 ' You stare—but, Sirs, I've got it yet,
 ' And can produce it.'—' Pray, Sir, do :
 ' I'll lay my life the thing is blue.'—
 ' And I'll be sworn that when you've seen
 ' The reptile, you'll pronounce him green.'—
 ' Well then, at once to ease the doubt,'

Replies the man, ' I'll let him out ;
 ' And when before your eyes I've set him,
 ' If you don't find him black I'll eat him.'
 He said ; then full before their sight
 Produc'd the beast ; and lo ! 'twas white.—
 Both star'd ; the Man look'd wond'rous wise.—

' My children,' the CAMELION cries,
 (Then first the creature found a tongue)
 ' You all are right, and all are wrong ;
 ' When next you talk of what you view,
 ' Think others see as well as you,
 ' Nor wonder if you find that none
 ' Prefers your eye-sight to his own.'

FABLE



FABLE XXXV.

The Force of PREJUDICE.

ONCE on a time, or story lies,
A Deity forsook the skies;
And rambling curious up and down,
Enter'd at length an Afric town;
Where liv'd a tribe of mortals black,
With each a hump npon his back;
A burthen common to the nation,
Thro' each successive generation.

The comely God, well-shap'd and fair,
March'd forward with a graceful air;
While, gathering round, the gaping throng
Wonder'd, and hooted him along:
This gives a kick, and that a thump;
All crying, Where's the fellow's hump?
The females too, among the rest,
Their detestation loud exprefs'd;
While luscious jokes were cut and crack'd,
To see a man so slender back'd;
Eager each flirt to have a fling,
At such a pale-fac'd ugly thing.

Nay,

Nay, heaven knows where their taunts had ended,
If fate the God had not befriended.

But, so it chanc'd, a sober Sage
Advanc'd, rever'd for sense and age ;
Made wise by time and observation,
His knowledge glean'd from every nation :

He Whites had seen, as well as Blacks ;

No mountain bearing on their backs ;

And knew, from reasons consequential,

Colour and form were not essential ;

Yet still too wise to call in doubt

The wisdom of the rabble rout,

He thus, the stranger to protect,

Address'd the mob with due respect :—

‘ O give, my friends, your insults o’er,

‘ Nor vex this hapless creature more ;

‘ What tho’ before our eyes we see

‘ A lump of fair deformity ;

‘ Not e’en a mole-hill on his shoulder,

‘ To captivate one black beholder ;

‘ But like an unshap’d log he stands,

‘ Unfinish’d left by Nature’s hands ;

‘ Yet mock him not, in cruel pride,

‘ For wanting what the Gods denied :

‘ ’Tis affectation makes the fool ;

‘ No object this of ridicule.

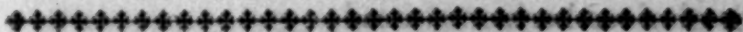
‘ It

‘ It might have been your fate or mine,
 ‘ To want the human hump divine ;
 ‘ And each of us, an ugly sight,
 ‘ Might have flat-shoulder’d been and white :
 ‘ If therefore Heav’n, to us so kind,
 ‘ Gives the protuberance behind,
 ‘ Thanks to the Gods with fervour pay,
 ‘ But send this wretch unhurt away.’

The mob, on every word intent,
 With some few murmurings gave consent ;
 When now the Sage the God address’d,
 And thus dismiss’d the injur’d guest :—

‘ On earth a welcome would’st thou find,
 ‘ Go hence, and learn to know mankind :
 ‘ In other lands thy form and face
 ‘ May challenge comeliness and grace ;
 ‘ But here to beauty are we blind,
 ‘ If wanting of a hump behind.
 ‘ Thus every nation, every tribe,
 ‘ Peculiar sentiments imbibe ;
 ‘ And Beauty, Virtue, Sense, lay claim
 ‘ To little more than empty name ;
 ‘ Varied in every clime and nation,
 ‘ As suits the general situation.
 ‘ Hence, judging each by different rules,
 ‘ They think each other knaves or fools ;
 ‘ While

- ‘ While no defect or vice is known,
- ‘ Unless it differ from their own.
- ‘ To turn the shafts of scorn aside,
- ‘ Then take this maxim for your guide:—
- ‘ Go where you will, be sure to wear
- ‘ THE GENERAL HUMP the people bear.’

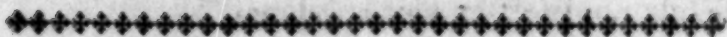


FABLE XXXVI.

The FOX and BRAMBLE.

A Fox closely pursu’d, thought it prudent and meet
 To a BRAMBLE for refuge all in haste to retreat;
 He enter’d the covert, but entering he found,
 That briars and thorns did on all sides abound,
 And that tho’ he was safe, yet he never could stir,
 But his sides they would wound, and tear off his fur.
 He shrugg’d up his shoulders, but would not complain,
 ‘ Torepine at small evils (quoth REYNARD) is vain:
 ‘ That no bliss is perfect I very well know,
 ‘ But from the same source good and evil will flow;
 ‘ And full sorely my skin tho’ these briars may rend,
 ‘ Yet they keep off the dogs, and my life will defend.
 ‘ For the sake of the good, then let evil be borne,
 ‘ For each sweet has its bitter, each BRAMBLE its
 ‘ thorn.’

FABLE



FABLE XXXVII.

The COUNTRY SQUIRE *and the* MANDRAKE.

THE Sun had rais'd above the mead
His glorious horizontal head ;
Sad Philomela left her thorn ;
The lively Linnets hymn'd the morn,
And Nature, like a waking bride,
Her blushes spread on every side.
The Cock (as usual) crow'd up Tray,
Who nightly with his master lay ;
The faithful Spaniel gave the word,
TRELOOBY at the signal stirr'd,
And with his gun from wood to wood,
The man of prey his course pursued ;
The dew and herbage, all around,
Like pearls and emeralds on the ground ;
The uncultur'd flowers, that rudely rise,
Where smiling Freedom Art defies ;
The larks in transport towering high,
The crimson curtains of the sky,
Affected not TRELOOBY's mind—
For what is beauty to the blind ?

Harmonious voice of sylvan love,
 Form'd charming concerts in the grove,
 Sweet Zephyr sigh'd on *Flora's* breast,
 And fann'd the Blackbird in her nest,
 Whispering he leapt from leaf to leaf;
 But what is music to the deaf?

At length, while poring on the ground,
 With monumental look profound,
 A curious vegetable caught
 His—something similar to thought;
 Wondering he ponder'd, stooping low,
 (TRELOOBY always lov'd a show)
 And on the MANDRAKE's vernal station
 Star'd with prodigious observation.
 Th' affronted MANDRAKE, with a frown,
 Address'd in rage the wealthy clown:—

‘ Proud member of the rambling race,
 ‘ That vegetate from place to place,
 ‘ Pursue the leveret at large,
 ‘ Nor here thy blunderbuss discharge,
 ‘ Disdainful tho’ thou look’st at me,
 ‘ What art thou, or what canst thou be?
 ‘ Nature, that markt thee as a fool,
 ‘ Gave no materials for the school;
 ‘ Wherein consist thy worth and fame?
 ‘ The preservation of the garb—

N

‘ For

- ‘ For what ? thou avaricious elf,
- ‘ But to devour it all thyself.
- ‘ To lead a life of drink and feast,
- ‘ T’ oppress the poor and cheat the priest,
- ‘ Or triumph in a virgin lost,
- ‘ Is all the manhood thou can’st boast.
- ‘ Pretty ! in Nature’s various plan,
- ‘ To see a WEED that’s like a MAN ;
- ‘ But ’tis a grievous thing indeed,
- ‘ To see a MAN so like a WEED.’



FABLE XXXVIII.

The LARK and its YOUNG ONES.

TWO friends you have, no more, nor less,
 Ready to execute commands.
 ‘ And who are they ?’ Why can’t you guess ?
 I’ll tell you—they’re your own two hands.
 They have no view, no private ends,
 And so will serve you, if they can ;
 But trust me, uncles, aunts, and cousins,
 With dear acquaintance old or new,
 Who make you promises by dozens,
 As if they’d nothing else to do,

On these if ever you depend,
They'll disappoint you to a man.

I see, and feel this every day,
And so may you, for aught I know;
It evermore has been the way,
For Æsop knew it long ago;
His LARK too knew it; (by the bye
His birds were wiser than our men.)

This LARK, amidst a field of grain,
Tended a brood of younglings callow;
And saw, with not a little pain,
The corn beginning to turn yellow;
Harvest, by that, she knew was nigh,
And she must shift her quarters then.

When, ere she ventur'd out for food,
To feed the young ones in the straw,
She left a caution with her brood,
To mind whate'er she heard or saw;
'Twas not from curiosity,
As you may well suppose.

As soon as she came home, one day,
The YOUNG ONES, sputtering out their sorrow,
Told her they heard the Farmer say,
The corn should be cut down to-morrow.

‘ Go to your neighbours, Son,’ says he,
‘ And beg their help.’—‘ O so it goes,
‘ Replies the LARK ; then cease your fright ;
‘ His friends have something else to do ;
‘ My life upon ’t, to-morrow night,
‘ The corn is just in statu quo.’

The morning came, but not one neighbour.
The Farmer, fretting, told his Son,
‘ Our business, Jack, must not stand still ;
‘ Go to your cousin George to-night,
‘ And call upon your uncle Will ;
‘ Beg they’ll be here before it’s light.’
Poor, honest man ! you’ll lose your labour,
They’re like your neighbours, ten to one.

At night the YOUNG LARKS told their story,
And fluttering made their simple moan ;
The OLD ONE said, they need not hurry,
She had relations of her own,
So knew how well they'd help each other.—
Her prophecy was but too true ;
The sun arose ; the sun went down ;
But neither George nor Will appears.
You'll find, in every country town,
A bowing tradesman, who declares,
He'll

He'll use you, as he would his brother;
Believe him; for he'd cheat him too.

‘ What's to be done ?’ the Farmer cries,
‘ The corn keeps shedding as it stands;’
‘ Father,’ says Jack, ‘ may I advise ?’
‘ Let's take two fiddles in our hands,
‘ And neither wait for foe nor friend,
‘ Begin, and finish when we can.’

The LARK, then, thought it time to move,
And gave this lesson to her brood;

‘ Be happy in your neighbour's love;

‘ But, as to any further good,

‘ On God, and on yourselves depend.’—

Who would not think this LARK a Man ?



FABLE XXXIX.

The TULIP and the MYRTLE.

'T WAS on the border of a stream,
A gayly-painted TULIP stood,
And, gilded by the morning beam,
Survey'd her beauties in the flood;

And sure more lovely to behold,
Might nothing meet the wistful eye,
Than crimson fading into gold,
In streaks of fairest symmetry.

The beauteous flower, with pride elate,
(Ah me! that pride with beauty dwells!)
Vainly affects superior state,
And thus in empty fancy swells:—

' O lustre of unrivall'd bloom!
' Fair painting of a hand divine!
' Superior far to mortal doom,
' The hues of Heav'n alone are mine!
' Away,

- ‘ Away, ye worthless, formless race !
- ‘ Ye weeds, that boast the name of flowers !
- ‘ No more my native bed disgrace,
- ‘ Unmeet for tribes so mean as yours !
- ‘ Shall the bright daughter of the Sun
- ‘ Associate with the shrubs of earth ?
- ‘ Ye slaves, your sovereign’s presence shun !
- ‘ Respect her beauties and her birth.
- ‘ And thou dull sullen ever-green !
- ‘ Shalt thou my shining sphere invade ?
- ‘ My noon-day beauties beam unseen,
- ‘ Obscur’d beneath thy dusky shade !’—
- ‘ Deluded flower !’ the MYRTLE cries,
- ‘ Shall we thy moment’s bloom adore ?
- ‘ The meanest shrub that you despise,
- ‘ The meanest flower has merit more.
- ‘ That Daisy, in its simple bloom,
- ‘ Shall last along the changing year ;
- ‘ Blush on the snow of Winter’s gloom,
- ‘ And bid the smiling Spring appear.
- ‘ The Violet, that, those banks beneath,
- ‘ Hides from thy scorn its modest head,

184 PRUDENTIAL FABLES.

‘ Shall fill the air with fragrant breath,
 ‘ When thou art in thy dusty bed.

‘ E’en I, who boast no golden shade,
 ‘ Am of no shining tints possest,
 ‘ When low thy lucid form is laid,
 ‘ Shall bloom on many a lovely breast,

‘ And he, whose kind and fostering care,
 ‘ To thee, to me, our beings gave,
 ‘ Shall near his breast my flow’rets wear,
 ‘ And walk regardless o’er thy grave.

‘ Deluded flower ! the friendly screen
 ‘ That hides thee from the noon-tide ray,
 ‘ And mocks thy passion to be seen,
 ‘ Prolongs thy transitory day.

‘ But, kindly deeds with scorn repaid,
 ‘ No more by Virtue need be done :
 ‘ I now withdraw my dusky shade,
 ‘ And yield thee to thy darling Sun.’

Fierce on the Flower the scorching beam,
 With all it’s weight of glory fell ;
 The Flower exulting caught the gleam,
 And lent its leaves a bolder swell.

Expanded

Expanded by the searhing fire,
The curling leaves the breast disclos'd ;
The mantling bloom was painted high'r,
And every latent charm expos'd.

But when the Sun was sliding low,
And evening came, with dews so cold,
The wanton Beauty ceas'd to blow,
And fought her bending leaves to fold.

Those leaves, alas ! no more would close ;
Relax'd, exhausted, sickening, pale ;
They left her to a Parent's woes,
And fled before the rising gale.

100

PART III.

ALLEGORICAL FABLES.



FABLE I.

The DEBATE of BODY and MIND.

SAYS BODY to MIND, 'Tis amazing to see,
' We're so nearly related, yet never agree;
' But lead a most wrangling, strange sort of life,
' As great plagues to each other as husband and wife.
' The fault's all your own, who, with flagrant op-
' pression,
' Encroach ev'ry day on my lawful possession:
' The best * room in my house you have seiz'd for
' your own,
' And turn'd the whole tenement quite upside down;
' While you hourly call in a disorderly crew
' Of vagabond rogues †, who have nothing to do
' But run in and out, hurry-scurry, and keep
' Such a horrible uproar, I can't get to sleep.

* The Head.

† The Thoughts.

‘ There’s my * kitchen sometimes is as empty
‘ as found,

‘ I call for my † servants, not one’s to be found ;
‘ They all are sent out on your Ladyship’s errand,
‘ To fetch some more riotous guests in, I warrant ;
‘ In short, things are growing, I see, worse and worse ;
‘ I’m determin’d to force you to alter your course.’

Poor MIND, who heard all, with extreme moderation,

Thought ’twas now time to speak, and make her accusation:—

‘ ’Tis I who, methinks, have most cause to complain,
‘ plain,

‘ For I’m cramped and confin’d like a slave in a chain;
‘ I did but step out on some weighty affairs,
‘ To visit, last night, my good friends in the stars ;
‘ But, before I was got half as high as the moon,
‘ You dispatch’d Spleen and Vapours to hurry me
‘ down ;

‘ *Vi & armis* they seiz’d me, in the midst of my flight,
‘ And shut me in caverns as dark as the night.’

‘ ’Twas no more,’ replies BODY, ‘ than what you
‘ deserv’d,

‘ While you rambled abroad, I at home was half
starv’d ;

* The Stomach.

† The Spirits.

And,

‘ And, unless I had closely confin’d you in hold,
‘ You’d have left me to perish with hunger and cold.’

MIND.—‘ I’ve a * Friend in reserve, who, tho’
‘ slow, is yet sure,

‘ And will rid me at last of your insolent pow’r ;
‘ Shall knock down your mud-walls, the whole fa-
‘ bric demolish,

‘ And at once your strong holds and my slav’ry
‘ abolish ;

‘ And, while in the dust your dull ruins decay,
‘ I shall snap off my chains, and fly freely away !’



FABLE II.

C O N T E N T.

YE Gay ! who court each fleeting joy,
Anxious for every gaudy toy ;
Who seek felicity in vain ;
Attend awhile my moral strain.
Jove once, revolving in his mind
The miseries of human kind,

* Death.

Commanded

Commanded PLEASURE, ever young,
 From Hercules and Hebe sprung,
 To quit Olympus' high abodes,
 The shining Capitol of Gods,
 And to this lower world repair,
 To comfort Man, to heal his care.

Swift as the mandate from the skies,
 The Pow'r benign thro' ether flies ;
 Her car the Loves and Graces bear,
 Quick sliding thro' the purple air.
 Such was her form, and such her mien,
 As Poets paint the Cyprian Queen :
 Her features glow'd with vivid bloom ;
 Her breath ambrosial sweets perfume,
 Such as, by balmy breezes bore,
 Blows from the spicy Saba's shore.

Arriv'd, she sought the splendid dome,
 Where soft-ey'd Lux'ry makes her home ;
 Adorn'd with all the charms of Art,
 With smiling look, and aching heart,
 High on a throne, in pageant state,
 The gaudy, painted Idol fate.
 Here Riot and Excess are found,
 The vaulted roofs with Mirth resound ;
 Till in the midst a Form appears,
 Low-bending with the weight of years :

A scythe

A scythe he bears; his trembling hand
Shakes the frail glass, whose ebbing sand
Numbers the days, whose little span
Grasps the swift-fleeting life of Man:
The mirthful Guests were struck with dread;
They cry'd out 'Time!' and frighted fled.

Now chang'd the scene; the glitt'ring train
Of airy Visions, light and vain,
Were vanish'd all; and She, who late
Maintain'd her sway in regal state,
A prey to heart-distracting Grief,
Solicits Death to bring relief.
Beset with Anguish, haggard Care,
And pining Want, and black Dispair;
Sorrow, and Shame, a rueful train,
The dismal family of Pain!

PLEASURE abhorr'd the ghastly sight,
And spreads, on soaring wing, her flight;
Till on a cliff, whose rugged side
Repell'd old Ocean's billowy tide,
She lights, descends it, and explores
Old Poverty's unfriendly doors.
In a deep vale his cave she found,
Cimmerian darkness reign'd around;
Big clouds hung o'er the mountain's brow,
And howling tempests rag'd below;

Nor .

Nor flocks nor herbage deck the plains,
 Where hoary Winter ever reigns.
 On the bare ground, amid the storm,
 Deserted lies the meagre Form,
 Whose eyes, like comets, baleful roll,
 And speak the anguish of his soul:
 And near at hand, in dismal cell,
 Chain'd to the earth, did Slav'ry dwell;
 Envy, and Mis'ry, Want, and Strife,
 And ev'ry ill that poisons life.

Hence, by these dreadful objects, driv'n,
 The Goddess ey'd her native Heav'n:
 Thither had she return'd, and left
 Mankind, of every joy bereft;
 But, as she wheel'd her airy flight,
 To earth once more she bent her sight:
 Full in her view (a beauteous scene!)
 Arcadia opes her level green.
 Charm'd with the prospect, she descends,
 To her deep grove her step she bends;
 A sweet recess, by Nature made,
 Embosom'd in the woodland shade;
 Deck'd with each sweet the year can bring,
 Each fragrant flow'r of blooming Spring;
 The stores that crown the Summer fields,
 The purple fruits that Autumn yields;

Amidst

Amidst whose shades there liv'd a Swain,
 Of manners gentle, aspect plain ;
 Gen'rous as plain, and mild as free,
 By mortals call'd SIMPLICITY ;
 And PLEASURE, by command of Jove,
 Here fix'd her dwelling, here her love :
 Lucina on this union smil'd,
 And blest them with a beauteous child,
 Bright-ey'd CONTENT, celestial Fair !
 CONTENT, that smooths the brow of Care :
 Her fire, SIMPLICITY, array'd
 With every grace the blushing Maid ;
 Pleasure her gentle bosom fraught
 With bliss, by mortals vainly sought :
 Her heart with joy, her cheek with health,
 Perpetual glow ;—she asks not wealth.
 Her dow'r, bestow'd by Pow'r divine,
 Exceeds the rich Peruvian mine.
 With her a train she brings along,
 Fit subject for the Poet's song ;
 Fair Peace, and Virtue, smiling Love,
 And Wisdom, eldest-born of Jove :
 Without her, Joy, like some fair flow'r,
 Fades, the light pageant of an hour !
 Hence Pain and Care attend on kings,
 Hence honey'd joys have venom'd stings ;

O

Since

Since neither gold nor gems can buy
 The pow'r to calm the rising sigh.
 Hence, tho' on earth we seek, in vain,
 True pleasure, unallay'd by pain;
 Yet every joy our state can give,
 CONTENT prepares us to receive.



FABLE III.

CARE *and* GENEROSITY.

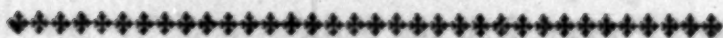
OLD CARE, with industry and art,
 At length so well had play'd his part,
 He heap'd up such an ample store,
 That Av'rice could not sigh for more:
 Ten thousand flocks his shepherd told,
 His coffers overflow'd with gold;
 The land all round him was his own,
 With corn his croud'd gran'ries groan.
 In short, so vast his charge and gain,
 That to possess them was a pain;
 With happiness oppress'd he lies,
 And much too prudent to be wise.

Near him there liv'd a beauteous Maid,
 With all the charms of youth array'd;
 Good, amiable; sincere, and free,
 Her name was GENEROSITY!
 'Twas her's the largesse to bestow
 On rich and poor, on friend and foe.
 Her doors to all were open'd wide,
 The pilgrim there might safe abide:
 For th' hungry and the thirsty crew,
 The bread she broke, the drink she drew;
 There Sicknefs laid her aching head,
 And there Distrefs could find a bed.—
 Each hour, with an all-bounteous hand,
 Diffus'd she blessings round the land;
 Her gifts and glory lasted long,
 And num'rous was th' accepting throng.
 At length pale Pen'ry seiz'd the Dame,
 And Fortune fled, and Ruin came;
 She found her riches at an end,
 And that she had not made one friend.—
 They blam'd her for not giving more,
 Nor thought on what she'd done before.
 She wept, she rav'd, she tore her hair,
 When, lo! to comfort her, came CARE—
 And cry'd, 'My dear! if you will join
 'Your hand in nuptial bonds with mine,

‘ All will be well ; you fhall have ftore,
‘ And I be plagu’d with wealth no more.
‘ Tho’ I refrain your bounteous heart,
‘ You ftill fhall act the gen’rous part.’

The bridal came—great was the feast,
And good the pudding, and the priest :
The Bride, in nine months, brought him forth
A little Maid, of matchless worth ;
Her face was mix'd of Care and Glee,
They christen'd her **ÆCONOMY** !
And stil'd her fair Discretion's Queen,
The mistress of the golden mean.

Now GENEROSITY, confin'd,
Is perfect easy in her mind ;
She loves to give, yet knows to spare,
Nor wishes to be free from CARE.



FABLE IV.

L O V E.

A FOWLER young, with weary feet,
In search of game the forest beat;
With longing hope, and fame at stake,
In vain had try'd each bush and brake;

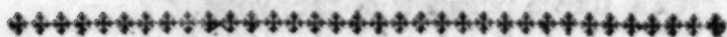
At

At length he spied a gaudy thing,
 With ivory neck, and painted wing.
 'Twas *Cupid*, fix'd upon a spray,
Cupid elop'd, and bent on play.
 Inviting mark the urchin stood,
 Perch'd like a pheasant of the wood.
 With eager haste, and gay delight,
 The piece was level'd to the sight;
 Secure he judg'd the prize; but now
 The game was on a distant bough;
 Intent the youth pursues, while still
 The little wanton mock'd his skill.
 Now, spent his spirits, slack his pace,
 And fretted with the fruitless chace,
 To one at hand the case reveal'd,
 A Yeoman, in the neighbouring field.

The rural Sage, instructive man,
 Smil'd, shook his head, and thus began:—

- ' Desist, vain youth! this game despise,
- ' Unhappy in the purchas'd prize;
- ' When once attain'd, 'twould vex thee more
- ' Than all thy labour griev'd before;
- ' Painful to keep, unsafe to find,
- ' Th' unluckiest of the feather'd kind.
- ' But if thy fortune shall dispense
- ' Maturer age, and ripen'd sense,

- ‘ The bird that now, so wild and shy,
- ‘ Deludes the motion of thy eye,
- ‘ Well-pleas’d, and fond to be caress’d,
- ‘ Shall fly, spontaneous to thy breast.’



FABLE V.

The FOLLY of IMITATION.

WHEN Heav’n of old, what time this world
began,

Sent forth her last, best work, her favourite, Man,
Each brute at once, with dread and wonder, saw
A being form’d to give creation law.

The shaggy Lion, with regret, beheld
His own rude strength by manly sense excell’d;
The Fox, less strong, tho’ infinite in art,
Thought bulk and vigour Man’s superior part;
In short, all creatures found, in him alone,
Some happier pow’r, that still surpass’d their own:
His form, his mind, as each stood fair to view,
Now here, now there, the growl of envy drew.

Disgust so gen’ral diff’rent symptoms show’d,
In fiercer Nature’s scorn indignant glow’d;

These

These to wild woods, with sullen rage, retir'd,
Averse to see, what seeing they admir'd :
While part, more docile, mimic skill address'd,
To catch the likeness each imagin'd best.
Some habit, one; some airs, another got,
Defect, or excellence, no matter what.

The Dog observ'd, with what familiar grace
The civil purpose mark'd the human face ;
'Twas his the civil purpose to prefer,
And lo ! a Flatterer grafted on a Cur.

The pow'r of speech the Parrot's wonder claim'd,
With rival voice, each object round he nam'd ;
Sounds indiscriminate, things right, things wrong,
For ever vibrate on the blockhead's tongue :
O ! grand distinction from the vulgar herd ;
See man's worst part re-echoed by a bird !

The Ape, with whimsical ambition fir'd,
Man's dext'rous hand and ready wit admir'd ;
So apt a mimic soon display'd his powers,
And apish parts were taught to rival ours.

The Cat from man her grave demeanour took,
The measur'd stalk, fix'd eye, and solemn look.

Fate saw from these to more the madness spread,
She saw—and thus, with indignation, said :—

' Yes, servile throng, your purpose shall succeed,
' Ye vile apostates from the lot decreed ;

- ' The ill-judg'd likeness you have fought, retain,
 ' But ye shall live a mean, domestic train,
 ' The slaves of him with whom your folly vied,
 ' Slaves of his wants, his pleasures, and his pride.'



FABLE VI.

FAME *and his* COMPANIONS.

IT happen'd once upon a time,
 (A phrase made choice of for the rhyme)
 WATER and FIRE agreed to stray
 With FAME, the partner of their way.
 FIRE was a noisy, rattling blade,
 WATER, a bashful, gentle maid :
 Nor let the wise with wonder read
 That too such contraries agreed ;
 For greater opposites than these,
 The love of fame unites with ease.

Through various realms they travell'd long,
 Went often right, but oftener wrong ;
 FIRE sometimes miss'd his proper road,
 And in a miser's chimney glow'd ;
 WATER, mistaking her design,
 Intruded frequently on wine ;

While

While FAME, deluded by the croud,
Lodg'd with the crafty and the proud.

Thus, men of diff'rent taste, in vain
Attempt one project to sustain;
For, while they dream of doing wonders,
They lead eath other into blunders.

At length, with various errors tir'd,
Their first design a change requir'd;
WATER and FIRE, to gain their ends,
Propos'd to part—but part as friends;
Each was to leave some mark behind him,
That t'other at a pinch might find him.

‘ Where sprightly verdure decks the ground,’
(Says WATER) ‘ I shall still be found :

‘ With Wealth and Pow'r sometimes I dwell,

‘ But oft'ner in the Hermit's cell ;

‘ Banish'd from feasts, by nobler claret,

‘ I seek the raptur'd Poet's garret ;

‘ Where trade prevails my torrents flow,

‘ My streams where bending osiers grow.’

‘ Where circling clouds of smoke aspire,

‘ You're sure to meet with me,’ (says FIRE :))

‘ Deep in the bowels of the mine,

‘ And in the stars above, I shine :

‘ In every house, on winter nights,

‘ In every verse the Poet writes ;

I luminate,

202 ALLEGORICAL FABLES,

' I luminate, as whims prevail,
 ' A city, or a glow-worm's tail.'
 ' Comrades !' (says FAME) ' I own I'm loth
 ' To tell my temper to you both :—
 ' When lov'd and courted by my friends,
 ' My care their every step attends ;
 ' When view'd with a neglectful eye,
 ' Stung with th' affront, at once I fly :
 ' Since this the case, from either side
 ' It gives me sorrow to divide ;
 ' You, when you please, by certain signs,
 ' When love, or interest, inclines,
 ' Again may meet, tho' now you sever ;
 ' But—whom I leave, I leave for ever.'



FABLE VII.

A BEAUTY, and TIME.

HOW much the inward charms surpass
 A brilliant eye, or blooming face,
 Need not, to such as think, be told :
 But let my tale this truth unfold ;
 The moral to the vain display,
 And teach them not to lose a day.

A certain

A certain celebrated Fair,
 (Bred—'tis no matter when or where,
 But doubtless in some country air)
 Chose to retire from public praise,
 As Phœbus hides in clouds his rays,
 To burst with more refulgent blaze,
 A villa's hospitable seat
 Affords her the desir'd retreat:
 Each rural scene, each verdant field,
 New prospects and new pleasures yield;
 Here, blest with dear variety,
 No nymph more happy liv'd than she;
 But, oft repeated to her eyes,
 The transient pleasure fades and dies:
 The purling brook, the waving corn,
 The dappled eve, the ruddy morn,
 The zephyrs whisp'ring through the trees,
 No longer now have pow'r to please.

The Virgin, on her arm reclin'd,
 Revolving in her pensive mind
 Her mirthful hours, her present pain,
 And joys she wish'd to taste again,
 Beheld an airy Form appear,
 Which fill'd her heart with throbbing fear.
 In his right hand a scythe he bore,
 And, bald behind, he only wore
 A single lock of hair before:

His

His left hand held the running glass,
Which shews how swift our minutes pass.
She shrieking, cried, 'O, hideous spright!

' How can you cruelly delight
' To teaze me thus from morn to night?
' Not, as in town, unseen you fly,
' Where all was mirth and gaiety;
' But here so heavily you tread,
' The vapours almost strike one dead:
' Then, pr'ythee, stern, ungrateful guest,
' No more my happiness molest!

The awful Vision calm reply'd:—

' Imperious fair one, check thy pride,
' And deign to turn those scornful eyes,
' Though not to bless a lover's sighs,
' To view, at least, this faithful mirror,
' To thoughtless Beauties such a terror;
' Let this inform thee how my pow'r
' Prevails upon thee every hour;
' How at my feet the great and small,
' And e'en LUCINDA's charms must fall.'

Here, from her languishment, the Maid,
As from a trance awaking, said:—

' What of my rival you impart,
' Cheers and revives my drooping heart;
' Not half so frightful as before—
' Dear creature! stay, and tell me more:

' Shall

- ' Shall then LUCINDA's empire fail,
 ' And my unheeded charms prevail ?'
 ' Poor wretch ! how thoughtless, and how vain !'
 (The angry Shade reply'd again)
 ' I fear thee impotent to reach
 ' The lesson I would kindly teach.
 ' The beauties of her face and thine,
 ' Touch'd by my hand, shall soon decline :
 ' But know, the happy Nymph can spare
 ' Charms to adorn a thousand Fair,
 ' Yet still retain so large a store,
 ' That wond'ring mortals shall adore.
 ' Good-nature, Ease, Benevolence,
 ' An humble, yet exalted sense,
 ' Conspicuous in LUCINDA shine,
 ' And all her outward charms refine ;
 ' And tho' the hours, with envious haste,
 ' Approach, those outward charms to waste,
 ' Her mind, with every grace replete,
 ' Shall e'en the pow'r of Death defeat,
 ' And, unconcern'd, the victor meet :
 ' For when that lovely mass of clay
 ' His mighty summons must obey,
 ' Her worth the silver trump of Fame
 ' To after ages shall proclaim :

}
 ' Her

' Her worth, far brighter than the morn,
 ' Or gems that regal crowns adorn,
 ' When Time and Death must cease to be,
 ' Shall triumph in eternity !'



FABLE VIII.

IMAGINATION's *Search after* HAPPINESS.

STRUCK with his charms whom all admire,
 Whose beauties colder bosoms fire,

IMAGINATION ventur'd forth,
 To try if chance she might discover
 The haunts of HAPPINESS, her Lover,
 Nor fear'd the frowns of Wit or Worth :
 No blame could on her choice be thrown,
 When once the Object's name was known.

To LOVE's gay temple first she flies,
 And darts around her piercing eyes ;

' And is my Hero here ?' she cries. —

' Perhaps he may,' the God replies :

' But freely search my grove around,

' Nor think yourself confin'd ;

' His name our echoes all resound,

' Perhaps his form you'll find.'

The

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The Nymph was pleas'd, her search renew'd,
Thro' each soft maze her love pursu'd;
At every turn his name she heard,
And much she hop'd, and much she fear'd:

'Till, as she ran, with rapid force,
Fair Delicacy check'd her course;
With eye severe, the lovely Maid
Blush'd for her friend, while thus she said:—
' I never thought to see you here,
' Without a veil too! fie, my dear!
' To seek your Lover! and is this
' A likely seat for sober bliss?—
' Believe my words, and quick recede,
' No happiness lives here, indeed.'

IMAGINATION stood corrected,
Then swiftly from her presence flew;
And soon her wand'ring steps directed
T' AMBITION's palace, now in view.
Fix'd on a mount of steep ascent

The glittering fabric stood;
The way was slippery as she went,
And wet with human blood:
Her Lover's form on high was plac'd,
To tempt her steps along;
But when the Phantom she embrac'd,
It vanish'd, and was gone.

From

From hence, with trembling haste, she sped,
 And to the realms of RICHES fled :
 Consumptive Care, and dropsied Pride,
 With tinsell'd Splendor, here she spied ;
 Dignity, Pomp, and Power, she saw,
 And Fashion, that keeps fools in awe ;
 Nor aught was wanting, more or less,
 Save what she sought for, HAPPINESS.

What has our Heroine next to do ?

Her journey she began to rue,
 For why ? we're all at sea again,
 No places now remain
 To try our fortunes in, 'tis plain ;
 And yet this foolish, luckless love

Would let her have no rest ;
 Tho' 'gainst it all she could she strove,
 Still it would flutter in her breast.

While thus she thought, and would have spoke,
 Sudden a voice the silence broke :—

' Come to my cot, despairing Maid,
 ' 'Tis mine alone to give you aid ;
 ' Come to my cot, and live with me,
 ' *In unreprieved pleasures free ;*
 ' CONTENT, that smooths the bed of Age,
 ' Meek PEACE, that loves the hermitage,
 ' And CONTEMPLATION, hoary sage,
 ' With

' With me long time have deign'd to dwell,
 ' And dignify'd my homely cell ;
 ' If you such company can bear,
 ' And will awhile inhabit there,
 ' Nor more your search renew,
 ' Your Lover will no longer fly ;
 ' 'Tis his to court when we deny,
 ' And fly when we pursue.'
 The Virgin weigh'd, and found her wise,
 Nor scorn'd to own herself to blame ;
 But took fair PIETY's advice :—
 Uncall'd, the Lover came.



FABLE IX.

FASHION *and* NIGHT.

FASHION, a motley Nymph, of yore,
 The Cyprian Queen to Proteus bore ;
 Various herself, in various climes,
 She moulds the manners of the times ;
 And turns, in every age and nation,
 The chequer'd wheel of variegation :
 True female, that ne'er knew her will,
 Still changing, tho' immortal still.

P

One

One day, as the inconstant Maid
 Was careless on her sofa laid,
 Sick of the sun, and tir'd with light,
 She thus invok'd the gloomy NIGHT:—
 ' Come! these malignant rays destroy,
 ' Thou skreen of shame, and rise of joy;
 ' Come, from thy western ambuscade,
 ' Queen of the rout and masquerade,
 ' Nymph! without thee no cards advance,
 ' Without thee halts the loitering dance;
 ' 'Till you approach, all, all's restraint,
 ' Nor is it safe to game or paint.
 ' The belles and beaux thy influence ask;
 ' Put on the universal mask;
 ' Let us invert, in thy disguise,
 ' That odious nature we despise.'

She ceas'd;—the fable-mantled Dame,
 With slow approach, and awful, came;
 And, frowning with sarcastic sneer,
 Reproach'd the female rioter:—
 ' That nature you abuse, my Fair,
 ' Was I created to repair;
 ' And contrast, with a friendly shade,
 ' The pictures Heaven's rich pencil made;
 ' And, with my sleep-alluring dose,
 ' To give laborious Art repose;

' To

- ‘ To make both noise and action cease,
- ‘ The queen of secrecy and peace.
- ‘ But thou, a rebel vile and vain,
- ‘ Usurp’st my lawful, old domain ;
- ‘ My sceptre thou affect’st to sway,
- ‘ And all the various hours are Day.
- ‘ With clamours of unreal joy,
- ‘ My sister, Silence, you destroy.
- ‘ The blazing lamp’s unnatural light,
- ‘ My eye-balls weary and affright.
- ‘ But if I am allow’d one shade,
- ‘ Which no intrusive eyes invade,
- ‘ There all th’ atrocious imps of Hell,
- ‘ Theft, Murder, and Pollution dwell ;
- ‘ Think then how much, thou toy of chance,
- ‘ Thy praise is like my worth t’ inhance :
- ‘ Blind thing ! that runn’st without a guide,
- ‘ Thou whirlpool in a rushing tide ;
- ‘ No more my fame with praise pollute,
- ‘ But damn me into some repute.’



FABLE X.

BEAUTY *and* MODESTY.

BEAUTY and MODESTY, I've heard
 By sages oftentimes averr'd,
 Were female twins, begot by Jove,
 To bless the world with joy and love.
 Equally beautiful and fair,
 They grew a lovely blooming pair;
 And never shone with such a grace
 As when together in one place.
 Some have observ'd, each, when alone,
 With much a fainter lustre shone;
 Others, that, separately seen,
 MODESTY wore the brighter mien:
 Howe'er that be, they cheer'd the plains,
 The ruddy nymphs, the healthy swains,
 Enliven'd even Nature's force,
 And gave of bliss an endless source.
 But see! by Fate, or Fortune's sport,
 They both are introduc'd to court;
 Where Grandeur, Pomp, and glittering Pride,
 Which beckon Innocence aside

From

From early virtue, BEAUTY caught,
 And deeply in her bosom wrought.
 With sparkling fire now roll her eyes,
 Her lily breasts with ardour rise ;
 Quick pants her heart, high swell her veins,
 And proud o'er all the Youth she reigns :
 The Youth, with greedy eyes, devour
 Her charms, and feel and own her pow'r ;
 Each glance their longing souls inspires,
 They burn, they rage with fierce desires.
 But on her *Sister* when they gaz'd,
 The lovely Fair, confus'd, amaz'd,
 With blushing cheek, and downcast eyes,
 Each look and each approach denies :
 Easy, tho' grave, soft, tho' severe,
 She whisper'd oft in BEAUTY's ear :—
 ' *Sister*, be wise, your charms conceal,
 ' O'er all your beauties throw my veil ;
 ' Nor so believe them hid from sight,
 ' For even then they'll blaze too bright.'

BEAUTY, at first, the counsel took,
 And guarded every turn and look ;
 Scarce rose a thought within her soul,
 Save what the *Sister* could controul.
 But, ah ! the splendid show and form,
 Her little heart unpractis'd warm :

Peers, beaux, and coxcombs, swell her train,
 And BEAUTY grows exceeding vain;
 Vain, thus to triumph o'er her sex,
 Vain, her admirers to perplex,
 Who breathe the raptures which they feel,
 As they attend her conscious heel.
 She's caught! and now Italian airs,
 And coronets, and Flanders mares,
 Ridottos, and the masquerade,
 Her thoughts, and virtue too, invade.

MODESTY found it now lay on her
 Stronger to guard her *Sister's* honour;
 She therefore plied her home and close,
 With many a sharp, tho' wholesome dose;
 Shew'd her the projects that were brewing,
 To make her fall a shining ruin;
 That her adorers' speeches, tried
 By Truth, would shew what ills they hide;
 And that disgrace and foul reproach
 Must pay for gilded chair and coach.

On gaiety and pleasure bent,
 In all retirement, discontent,
 Of MODESTY now BEAUTY grew
 So tir'd, she knew not what to do,
 Or how to shun her loath'd advice,
 So very free, so over nice.

To

To visits BEAUTY oft repairs,
 And in the front-box shews her airs;
 The tedious midnight hours to kill,
 Plays, picquet, ombre, and quadrille;
 Stabs Reputation thro' and thro',
 And careless meets a dun or two;
 Double entendres nicely hit
 Her taste, and DAPPER is a wit!
 She forces, with her boundless pride,
 Her guardian Sister from her side;
 Who ever since, for most part, dwells
 In humble cottages and cells,

BEAUTY, thus lost, by passions driven
 To all the follies under heaven,
 Awhile in pomp and pleasure reigns;
 But sudden change the fickle scenes:
 Of years the lovely blooming care,
 One moment sinks in black despair;
 What YESTERDAY had idolis'd,
 Now falls unpitied, and despis'd,



FABLE XI.

The ORIGIN of CARDS.

THOU, whom to counsel is to praise,
 With candour view these friendly lays,
 Nor, from the vice of Gaming free,
 Believe the satire points at thee;
 Who Truth and Worth betimes canst prize,
 Nor yet too sprightly to be wise.
 But hear this tale of antient time,
 Nor think it vain tho' told in rhyme.

Elate with wide-extended pow'r,
 Sworn rivals from the natal hour,
 AVARICE and SLOTH, with hostile art,
 Contended long for Woman's heart:
 She, fond of wealth, afraid of toil,
 Still shifted the capricious smile;
 By turns, to each the heart was sold,
 Now bought with Ease, and now with Gold;
 Scarce either grasp'd the sovereign sway,
 When chance revers'd the prosperous day,
 The doubtful strife was still renew'd,
 Each baffled oft, but ne'er subdu'd:

When

When AVARICE shew'd the glittering prize,
 And hopes and fears began to rise,
 SLOTH shed on every busy sense
 The gentle balm of Indolence :
 When SLOTH had screen'd with artful night
 The soft pavilion of delight,
 Stern AVARICE, with reproachful frown,
 Would scatter thorns amongst her down.

Thus each, by turns, the realm controul'd,
 Which each in turn despair'd to hold ;
 At length, unable to contend,
 They join to choose a common friend ;
 To close, in love, the long debate,
 Such love as mutual fears create.

A friend they chose, a friend to both,
 Of AVARICE born, and nurs'd by SLOTH :
 An artful Nymph, whose reign began,
 When Wisdom ceas'd to dwell with Man ;
 In Wisdom's awful robes array'd,
 She rules o'er politics and trade ;
 And, by the name of CUNNING known,
 Makes Wealth, and Fame, and Power her own.

In quest of CUNNING, then, they rove
 O'er all the windings of the grove,
 Where twining boughs their shades unite,
 For CUNNING ever flies the light.

At 1

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At length, thro' maze perplext with maze,
Through tracts confus'd, and private ways,
With sinking hearts, and weary feet,
They gain their favourite's dark retreat;
There watchful at the gate they find
SUSPICION, with her eyes behind;
And wild ALARM, awaking, blows
The trump, that shakes the world's repose.

The Guests well known, salute the guard,
The hundred gates are soon unbarr'd;
Through half the gloomy cave they press,
And reach the wily Queen's recess;
The wily Queen disturb'd they view,
With schemes to fly, though none pursue;
And in perpetual care to hide,
What none will ever seek, employ'd.

'Great Queen!' (they pray'd) 'our feuds com-
'pose,

'And let us never more be foes!'—
'This hour' (she cries) 'your discord ends,
'Henceforth be SLOTH and AVARICE friends;
'Henceforth, with equal pride, prepare
'To rule at once the captive Fair!'

Th' attentive Powers in silence heard,
Nor utter'd what they hop'd or fear'd,
But search'd in vain the dark decree,
For Cunning loves obscurity;

Nor

Nor would she soon her laws explain,
For Cunning ever joys to pain.

She then, before their wondering eyes,
Bids piles of painted paper rise :

‘ Search now these heaps’ (she cries) ‘ here find
‘ Fit emblem of your power combin’d.’

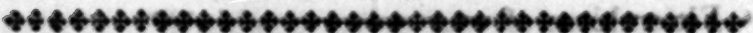
The heap to AVARICE first she gave,
Who soon descried her darling Knave;
And SLOTH, ere envy long could sting,
With joyful eyes beheld a King.

‘ These gifts,’ (said Cunning) ‘ bear away,
‘ Sure engines of despotic sway;
‘ These charms, dispens’d o’er all the ball,
‘ Secure to rule where’er they fall.
‘ The love of Cards let SLOTH infuse,
‘ The love of Money soon ensues;
‘ The strong desire shall ne’er decay,
‘ Who plays to win, shall win to play:
‘ The breast, where Love had plann’d his reign,
‘ Shall burn, unquench’d, with lust of gain;
‘ And all the charms that Wit can boast,
‘ In dreams of better luck be lost.’

Thus, neither innocent nor gay,
The useless hours shall fleet away;
While Time o’erlooks the trivial strife,
And, scoffing, shakes the sands of life;

Till

To Sloth and Avarice falls a prey.



FABLE XII.

The MISLETOE *and the* PASSION-FLOWER.

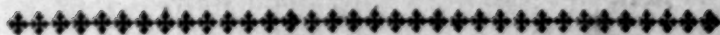
IN this dim cave a Druid sleeps,
 Where stops the passing gale to moan;
 The rock he hollow'd o'er him weeps,
 And cold drops wear the fretted stone.
 In this dim cave, of different creed,
 An Hermit's holy ashes rest :
 The school-boy finds the frequent bead,
 Which many a formal matron blest.
 That truant-time full well I know,
 When here I brought, in stolen hour,
 The Druid's magic MISLETOE,
 The holy Hermit's PASSION-FLOWER.
 The offerings on the mystic stone
 Pensive I laid, in thought profound ;
 When from the cave a deepening groan
 Issu'd, and froze me to the ground.

I hear :

I hear it still—Dost thou not hear?
 Does not thy haunted fancy start?
 The sound still vibrates thro' mine ear—
 The horror rushes on my heart.
 Unlike to living sounds it came,
 Unmix'd, unmelodis'd with breath;
 But, grinding through some scrannel frame,
 Creak'd from the bony lungs of Death.
 I hear it still,—‘Depart!’ it cries;
 ‘No tribute bear to shades unblest;
 ‘Know, here a bloody Druid lies,
 ‘Who was not nurs’d at Nature’s breast.
 ‘Associate he with dæmons dire,
 ‘O’er human victims held the knife,
 ‘And, pleas’d to see the babe expire,
 ‘Smil’d grimly o’er its quivering life.
 ‘Behold its crimson-streaming hand
 ‘Erect!—his dark, fix’d, murderous eye!’
 In the dim cave I saw him stand;
 And my heart died—I felt it die.
 I see him still—Dost thou not see
 The haggard eye-balls’ hollow glare;
 And gleams of wild ferocity
 Dart thro’ the sable shade of hair?
 What meagre Form behind him moves,
 With eye that rues th’ invading day?

And

And wrinkled aspect wan, that proves
 The mind to pale remorse a prey ?
 What wretched—hark !—The voice replies :—
 ‘ Boy ! bear these idle honours hence ;
 ‘ For here a guilty Hermit lies,
 ‘ Untrue to Nature, Virtue, Sense.
 ‘ Though Nature lent him powers to aid
 ‘ The moral cause, the mutual weal ;
 ‘ Those powers he sunk in this dim shade,
 ‘ The desperate suicide of zeal.
 ‘ Go, teach the drone of faintly haunts,
 ‘ Whose cell’s the sepulchre of time ;
 ‘ Tho’ many a holy hymn he chaunts,
 ‘ His life is one continued crime.
 ‘ And bear them hence, the Plant; the Flower ;
 ‘ No symbols those of systems vain !
 ‘ They have the duties of their hour,
 ‘ Some bird, some insect to sustain.’



FABLE XIII.

The DEATH *of* GENIUS.

FROM too alert a disposition,
 GENIUS was in a sad condition ;
 Threadbare and tatter'd were his cloaths,
 His shoes, alas ! had lost their toes ;
 And every thing alike seem'd fit
 To represent a needy Wit.

Distresses now, of every kind,
 Had harass'd and fatigu'd his mind,
 In such a manner, that e'en health
 Was not less distant than his wealth ;
 Half-starv'd, and sick, he could not bear it,
 But sought repose in lonely garret.

When folks are sick, 'tis nothing new
 T' expect their friends with ' How d'ye do ?'
 Some come through pride and ostentation,
 And some, for sake of mere vexation,
 Shrug up their shoulders, cry, ' 'Tis pity !'
 Think to insult is to be witty.

Poor GENIUS now lay very ill,
 Without a doctor, nurse, or pill ;

When,

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When, lo ! the door wide open flew,
A meagre Form came straight to view,
With silver beard, and wrinkled face,
With solemn, yet with hasty pace.

Him GENIUS knew, by his complexion,
To be no other than REFLECTION ;
Struck with the sight, a thousand things,
Since first he left his leading-strings,
Rush'd in at once upon his mind,
And drove all peace a mile behind.

The next, a lisping, ambling Dame,
Came in, and FOLLY was her name ;
And instantly she sought the bed,
Where GENIUS laid his aching head,
And whisper'd something in his ear,
Which serv'd but to augment his fear ;
Then, with a kiss, she sigh'd, and cried,
' You surely can't forget your Bride !'

Another now, with loud horse grin,
Came, without ceremony, in ;
Miss FORTUNE this—who thus began :—
' My charming Youth ! my dearest Man !
' Tho' FOLLY, I must own's your bride,
' Both legally and firmly tied,
' Yet surely GENIUS can't forget
' How much he's in Miss FORTUNE's debt.

I

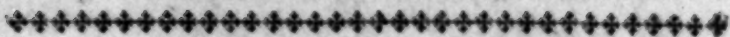
' When

‘ When every friend hath left your side,
 ‘ And even FOLLY, tho’ your bride ;
 ‘ Yet I, you know, was ever near,
 ‘ To sooth your woes, and soften care :
 ‘ Then give me no unkind reply,
 ‘ With you I’ll live, with you I’ll die.’

Now mad, or worse than mad, he rav’d,
 And every Power divine he brav’d :
 When, lo ! another meagre Shade,
 (Like some poor antiquated maid)
 Advanc’d :—‘ Behold me here !

‘ A friend to all—then banish care ;
 ‘ My name is HOPE ; have patience, then,
 ‘ And all will soon be well again !’

PATIENCE surviv’d till HOPE was fled,
 And left poor GENIUS almost dead :
 When DEATH, the only friend he had,
 Thinking his case extremely bad,
 Came in, and, with a well-trimm’d dart,
 Struck him, at once, quite thro’ the heart.
 Miss FORTUNE, FOLLY, left his side,
 And GENIUS in a garret died !



FABLE XIV.

LUXURY *and* WANT.

AS late I mus'd on Fortune's ebb and flow,
 Life's airy pleasures, and substantial woe,
 The thoughtless Mirth, that laughs in Pleasure's
 eye,

The boast of Vice, and pride of Vanity,
 O'er nodding Reason downy slumbers stole,
 And Fancy's visions open'd on my soul.

Aloft, on proud Ionic columns rear'd,
 A sumptuous Dome in ruin'd pomp appear'd ;
 A baseless pillar here, with moss o'ergrown,
 Press'd dearth's green bosom with a length of stone ;
 There, a tall portal, sculptur'd once so gay,
 Records no story, but its own decay.

I enter'd—crowds, who blush'd to be descry'd,
 With famish'd looks thro' mould'ring arches
 glide :

I paus'd, and, curious as I gaz'd around,
 Saw a lean hag lie stretch'd along the ground :
 Round either arm a tatter'd rug she drew,
 Her shame conceal'd with rags of various hue ;

I

A cloth

A cloth her forehead bound, her legs were bare,
And foul and clotted was her grizzled hair.

‘ Whence, and what art thou? wretch!’ sur-
pris’d, I cry’d. —

‘ WANT is my name, well known,’ the Wretch
reply’d.

‘ The work of LUXURY, this lofty dome,

‘ So righteous Jove ordains, is now my home.

‘ Time was, this roof return’d the dulcet voice

‘ Of music, blended with a critic’s choice.

‘ Dependent thence a thousand tapers glow’d,

‘ The vine’s rich juice from silver fountains

‘ flow’d;

‘ An hundred dainties o’er the board were spread,

‘ And all Arabia’s spicy fragrance shed.

‘ The velvet couches, and the cushion’d chair,

‘ Swell’d high with down, as soft as summer’s air;

‘ And female beauty, smiling o’er the scene,

‘ Spread joy around, of every joy the queen!

‘ Then at these doors, by hunger and by grief

‘ Oppress’d, with suppliant voice I sought relief;

‘ Relief I sought, alas! but sought in vain,

‘ With poignant taunt rebuk’d, and sour disdain,

‘ The batt’ning Priest, with supercilious face,

‘ Inferred from indigence the want of grace;

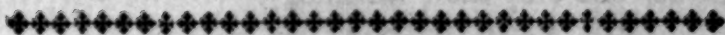
‘ The Lawyer, in quaint terms, with look demure,

‘ Gave hints of statute against vagrant poor;

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' Unmov'd and cool, the garter'd Statesman cry'd,
 ' For me fit refuge colonies supply'd.
 ' I sigh'd in secret, and to Heav'n my heart
 ' Ascending, Heav'n in pity took my part.
 ' Loud thunder roll'd—the fabric from its base
 ' Shook; and proud LUX'RY vanish'd from the
 ' place:
 ' Th' astonish'd crowd their patron's fall deplore,
 ' And pale and trembling issue from the door.
 ' I enter'd, prompted by a voice divine,
 ' Which thrice repeated, "WANT! this pile is
 " thine;
 " For know, by Jove and Fate it stands decreed,
 " Where LUX'RY riots thou shalt still succeed."
 ' Here, unmolested, from that hour I reign,
 ' And all the court of LUX'RY forms my train;
 ' Here still receiv'd by me, as hither driv'n
 ' By keen Necessity, the scourge of Heav'n:
 ' These are the wretches which around me throng,
 ' To me the Lawyer, Statesman, Priest, belong.
 She ceas'd! her words such strong emotions bred,
 They wak'd me, trembling, and the Vision fled.
 ' Save me from LUX'RY, gracious Heav'n!"
 I pray'd,
 ' That WANT's drear haunts my steps may ne'er
 ' invade.'

FABLE



FABLE XV.

MERIT *and* FORTUNE.

MERIT, from high extraction great,
A younger son, had no estate ;
FORTUNE, of less illustrious birth,
An only child, in wealth had worth :
These Hymen bound in sacred bands,
And join'd their hearts, and join'd their hands.
In happier days of old, 'tis said,
One wish, one will, their bosoms bred ;
The basis of their love, Esteem ;
Their concord, Fame's perpetual theme :
Then FORTUNE, still at MERIT's side
Appear'd, and MERIT with his bride ;
'Twas deem'd a crime, as yet unknown,
For either to be seen alone :
Alas ! the mode is alter'd now,
Tho' fit the match we still allow.
The Youth genteel, with winning air,
And Wealth and Beauty blest the Fair ;
Wealth, which alone can well supply
The want of all that charms the eye ;

In

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In her one only fault we find,
 Some little levity of mind ;
 But MERIT, if report says true,
 Still best to fix the Wanton knew ;
 And to a younger brother, sure,
 A match like this might joy secure,
 If ev'ry bliss, when long possess'd,
 Nor fail'd, nor languish'd in the breast,
 The dwelling of so bright a pair
 Was daily crouded like a fair ;
 Int'rest and Inclination drew
 The gazing, captivated crew ;
 Each sex, and age, and state admire,
 And praise the tongues of Fame might fire ;
 'Twas MERIT, who could speak with art,
 That charm'd the ear, and won the heart :
 And FORTUNE, though her treasure claim'd
 The pompous treat, was scarcely nam'd ;
 Yet, but for this, his friends must own,
 That MERIT had been scarcely known.
 Proud of the pref'rence Flatt'ry gave,
 He treated FORTUNE like a slave ;
 No more the Lover's tribute paid,
 A tyrant Lord his air display'd ;
 Judge if this conduct fail'd to move
 Those passions, which are foes to love :

A woman

A woman scorn'd!—and less than scorn
 His image from her heart had torn.
 Disgusted, and enrag'd, she fled
 At once his dwelling, and his bed :
 Nor need the Muse officious tell,
 Where'er she chose, she long might dwell ;
 The Great with joy receiv'd the guest,
 Su'd, flatter'd, honour'd, and carefs'd ;
 To her a thousand vows they frame,
 For not a needy guest she came ;
 Her riches were her earliest care,
 She left the house of MERIT bare.
 But, stript of all, he, self-sustain'd,
 The weak support of WEALTH disdain'd ;
 He proudly deem'd his mental store
 Would roll the chariot to his door,
 Would round him range the shining crowd,
 And win the Wise, and bend the Proud.

Deceitful thought ! deserted now,
 No poets praise, no courtiers bow ;
 E'en cits themselves his doors eschew ;
 Some friends remain, alas ! how few !
 All else on FORTUNE turn ther eyes ;
 Around her bend the fool and wise :
 E'en He, who scorn'd the Dame so late,
 Now waits a suppliant at her gate !

With

With conscious pow'r her bosom beats,
She tastes revenge, with all its sweets.

The haughty soul of MERIT quell'd,
He wept, and Pride in vain rebell'd ;
He sigh'd, but sigh'd and wept in vain,
Unmov'd the Dame enjoys his pain :
Neglected, lingering at the door,
The pangs of dumb Contempt he bore :
The pangs, yet doubled, to behold
The shining valves to Guilt unfold,
To ev'ry vice and folly free,
And none excluded thence, but he ;
E'en still, with persevering hate,
She scorns him, suing at her gate.

O ! could some happy Wit restore
Their union, to be broke no more !
But not, ah ! not to weak mankind,
Has Heav'n the mighty task assign'd ;
Who this atchieves, a god confess'd,
Shall claim the vows to gods address'd ;
To him shall Jove permit the skies,
And altars smoke, and temples rise.

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F I N I S.

